

Church & State

An Irish History Magazine

And Cultural Review Of Ireland And The World

Nation-Building ?

Communist Poland

Holocaust Facts

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on Ireland And Iraq

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VOX PAT

Nation-Building?

President Biden, when carrying through President Trump's agreement with the Taliban to withdraw the American Army from Afghanistan, said that the United States should stop trying to re-make other peoples in the American image.

Re-making other peoples in order to make them fit neatly into the order of the world as you wish it to be, is called *nation-building*. A more accurate name for it would be *cultural genocide*.

Five years after the United States invaded Afghanistan, the Rand Security Research Division published "*The Beginner's Guide To Nation-Building*" [!]. A more accurate name for it would be "*The Beginner's Guide To Cultural Genocide*". It was a brilliant notion: a set of Leggo instructions for the building of standardised human collectives that would be called *nations*, and that would fit together like a dream.

End Of History?

About fifteen years before that, an American intellectual with a Japanese name published a book that might have been called *The End Of History* but wasn't quite [Francis Fukuyama: *The End Of History And The Last Man*]. Its message was that, with the United States having won the World Cold War and the Soviet Union collapsing, the world would fall naturally into a set of contentedly liberal capitalist states or societies in which nothing much would happen. He announced that the era of the *Last Men* had arrived.

It would be a soporific world—the kind of world apparently envisaged as an ideal by Fergal Keane—the BBC one, who does international affairs for it. But the author must not have been familiar with Ferghal Keane, because the example he gives is the Last Men as depicted by Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*:

"They are clever and know all that hath come to pass, so that there is no end of mockery. They quarrel yet, but are soon reconciled—lest their stomachs turn.

"They have little lusts for the day and little lusts for the night: but they have regard for health.

"We have discovered happiness, say the last Men, and they blink..."

But it didn't happen. There was a great campaign to replace tobacco with cocaine but the world did not become Lotus Land—a world envisaged by Tennyson before Nietzsche—a world "*in which it seemed always afternoon*".

A Historical View

History has not ended, except for the time being in the Irish Free State under the influence of Professors Dermot Keogh and John A. Murphy of Cork University and their political protégé, Micheál Martin.

Joyce is famous for saying that history was a nightmare from which he was trying to awake. Wake up to what? Lotus Land!

History is time. Time is awareness of the succession of events. The alternative to time is Eternity. Eternity seems to

be a condition of unchanging contentedness in which nothing happens. The world of the Beatles' song, *Imagine*!

Joyce escaped to Trieste, an out-of-the-way place in the Hapsburg Empire which seemed to get left behind when Britain broke up the Hapsburg Empire in 1919 and re-made it into a series of nominal nation-states with inadequate national foundations, which were compelled to engage in frantic nationalist development in order to catch up with their premature formation into nation-states.

In the obscurity of Trieste, Joyce mulled over—in increasingly subjectivist language—an instant in the life of the Jesuit-educated stratum of the Dublin middle-class at the moment when he left. That was his Eternity—his escape from history. But history continued without him. It did not feel the lack of him. And presumably he was content to be out of it.

A book was published a few years ago with the anti-Joycean title, *Exit Into History*. It was about Eastern Europe in recent times. The title was so brilliant that one was disinclined to read the book lest it would not live up to it.

Europe, by and large, became fascist after 1918 in order to keep itself going amid the wreckage brought about by the totalitarian war fought by Britain against Germany. (The British war method was described as *totalitarian* by the architect of the British Welfare State, Lord Beveridge, in 1939 when another war of the same kind was in preparation.)

Fascism was the means by which capitalist civilisation was saved from Communism in the 1920s and 1930s. Winston Churchill said so—and he must have known, mustn't he?

By 1939 Britain judged that Fascism had saved Europe too well from Communism. Europe had become Germanic and Germany was back in business as a rival, so Britain made war on it in alliance with the embers of Republican France.

The British and French armies were routed in the first battle. France was occupied as a direct result of losing the War it had declared, and it made a settlement with Germany. Britain, made secure by its naval dominance of the world, refused to make a settlement, and it condemned France for settling, and made war on it. The Franco/German settlement could not be put into effect while Britain refused to settle, and spawned sabotage in France.

Britain continued the state of war without any prospect of winning it. It nibbled at the edges by means of the Navy and it did some bombing in order to keep Europe in an unsettled condition. It appealed to the United States to come and help it—in reality, to take over from it. The US, remembering the travesty of a settlement made by Britain in 1919, took no heed.

It is, in any case, highly doubtful that the US could in 1941 have done what it did in 1944.

The only realistic alternative to making a settlement with Germany—of "*surrendering*", in the War it itself had launched,

was the British way of putting it—lay in a German/Russian War.

The German Generals reckoned that Britain would settle promptly if the Russian possibility was scotched. It was assumed that this could be done easily, as it was generally agreed that Stalin—by means of senseless purges of the officer corps of the Red Army—had undermined its fighting powers.

So Communist Russia was invaded, and was seized upon by Britain as its Saviour—until it drove through to Berlin in 1945, and was denounced as the basic enemy of all civilisation.

In 1940, when Britain was pleading with the US to come back and save it from the consequences of its own actions—to take up again where it left off in disgust in 1920—a demand was raised for a Union (or a re-union) of America and Britain: an ending of the separation of 1783. It met with little response in either Britain or America. In one of its publications, *Union Now*, the following appears:

“Democracy gives a people greater enduring and inventive powers and makes for better morale than does autocracy, because it gives each citizen a direct and equal interest in the war. It is his war, not his ruler’s war...

“Conversely, autocracy to win must make its initial blows decisive... It must gamble to win in a war’s early period. For then it is at its peak because of its very nature: its disregard for human life and honour, its ruthlessness and terrorism, its secrecy and concentrated power. Dictatorship is a sprinter, not a distance runner, and it must keep the race short if it is to win” (C.K. Street, *Union Now With Britain*. 1941, p139).

That is certainly the rationalism of the matter, on the assumption that democracy’s advertisements of itself expressed the realities of things. But it did not prove to be the case.

The mass of the people were far more actively engaged in the Fascist and Communist systems than they were in the capitalist systems that were run politically in the medium of party conflict that was held to be the democratic norm.

Collectives?

“*Between the Individual and Humanity stands, and must continue to stand, a great fact—the Nation*”: A sense of being part of a large and distinctive collective existence appears to be a necessity of individual human existence. That was Arthur Griffiths’ insight.

The human race is too big, too multifarious, too much the case of being just everything, to give a sense of particular collectivity to the individuals who make it up. It is the nation state that engenders collective purpose. And the cohesive purposefulness of the nation is not strengthened when the nation state is subjected internally to the divisive influence of capitalist democracy, which functions as a kind of latent civil war.

The history of Europe between the Wars demonstrates that. Fascism arose out of Democracy, more or less in the way described by Plato two and a half thousand years ago. And Democracy did not restore itself.

How do individuals get taken out of themselves and merged into the great collective called a nation? That was the problem posed by sociologist Benedict Anderson, who made a fortune by posing it.

The answer is that they don’t. People are born into the nation. They are collective before they are individual. The collec-

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Some web addresses for associated sites—

Athol Books: <http://www.atholbooks.org>

The Heresiarch: <http://heresiarch.org>

There is a great deal of interesting reading. Go surf and see!

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Church & State

Editor: Pat Maloney

ISSN: 0332-3625

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tive is not created by a binding together of atomic individuals. The individual comes about through differentiation within the collective which, as far as he is concerned, is primeval.

The Imagined Nation was Benedict Anderson's bright idea. The sense of being part of a nation is brought about in the individual by a feat of imagination. The Irish franchise on that bright idea was undertaken by Professor Comerford of Maynooth, rather late in the day. In *Ireland: Inventing The Nation*, he took issue with the "two nations" view of the Northern Ireland situation, with which this publication was associated from the start—and at that time this magazine had to be smuggled into Maynooth, which was then a closely supervised clerical seminary.

Professor Comerford said that the propagators of the "two nations" saw the nation as a phenomenon of the natural order—a biological or racial phenomenon. In fact, the propagators, in an attempt not to be misunderstood, explained that they were using the term *nation* in the sense given it by the two classic writings on the subject: Renan's *What Is A Nation?* For the bourgeois world, and Stalin's work of the same name for the socialist world. Both of these works represent the nation as a transitory, historical form connected with conditions in post-feudal Europe. But, while it may be transitory in the context of a couple of thousand years, it is very durable in the context of the present.

Eric Hobsbawm, the intellectual of the British Communist Party, invented the complementary idea of *The Invention of Tradition*, and he said that the very idea of a nation bewildered him. He also published *The Forward March Of Labour Halted*. He had helped to halt it. Then he sat on his laurels and looked for something else to think about.

Washington, the master of half the world after Communism had broken Nazism, took the fragments of Nazism into its service after 1945 for the Cold War against Communism—which had to be Cold because the Communists made the nuclear bomb many years earlier than they were expected to.

Then, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, it took the fragments of Marxism into its service.

The Beginner's Guide To Nation Building comes from the same stable as the *Imagined Nation* and the *Invented Tradition*.

If the idea that the nation is a direct product of nature is wrong, it is at least far less wrong than the idea that the nation is something constructed by a kind of sociological Leggo set, which can be disassembled into its component parts, and then be reassembled into something else.

The occasional individual may differentiate himself so much from the collective in which he finds himself that he alienates himself from it and feels the urge to become part of something altogether different. We remember *Famous Seamus* worrying over whether he was an Irish poet any more or had grown into a British one, and concluding that it would be OK for him to be in a Book of British Verse. And likewise with Rory McIlroy after he became a star in the world of international golf.

There are international sets for such individuals to join, leaving the general ruck of humanity behind. But humanity exists in masses, and it is each mass that gives meaning to individuals within it. And the international set is only an *ad hoc* group of the passing moment. People do not die for each other, or for the collective, in the International set!

Famous Seamus was very appreciative of the late 16th century English verse, and it might be that Spenser is now seen as an Irish poet in truly enlightened circles. And it must be admitted that it was his aspiration to become an Irish poet by getting rid of the Irish, who were cluttering up the scene. The beautiful, fertile island deserved something better than them.

But the Replacement Irish failed to do the job! The mere Irish were not got rid of. They reproduced like cockroaches under abominable conditions—as an Israeli Minister observed of the Palestinians in more recent times.

A new order of things was established in 1691 and for most of the 18th century the native Irish were officially presumed not to exist. The Irishman of the 18th century was an English gentleman—and it was as an Irishman of the 18th century that Bernard Shaw said that he went to England around 1890.

But the Irish outlived the Kingdom of Ireland. They were still there in 1801, when the Ascendancy Kingdom and its Parliament were abolished, and they were increasing and multiplying right up to the Providential Famine.

But what they were *really* is a ques-

tion put by revisionist writers anxious for precision. A nation? The answer that meets the spirit of the question is never given: a heap of nondescript misery, without qualities, fantasised about romantically as a nation by the demagogue, O'Connell.

Millions of them were got rid of by one means and another in a few years—five or six millions, possibly more.

When Providence intervened—and we all know who Providence is in these matters. John Milton, Cromwell's poet and Secretary of State, told us—the population of Ireland was at least half that of England. After Providence had done its work, it was about a fifth. Surely that would be the end of them! *The Times*, a well-informed, thoughtful and well-written paper, was certain that it would be. Yet, only a generation later, they took the first step towards getting the country back.

They are in bad shape at present—for reasons that are in many ways the opposite of those of 1847. They live in the market place, and are affluent. They are highly-educated under the best Oxbridge tutelage. They are eager to lose themselves in globalist capitalist universalism, and to forgive and forget. But forgetting is not an easy thing to do. It is not actually a thing that can be done. It is not an action. To forget actively is to remember analytically. And Globalism—the running of the world by the United States—is in crisis.

The Only Indispensable Nation

President Obama said that the USA was "the exceptional nation", and "the only indispensable nation". That remarkable statement was barely noticed by the Free World—the world that is not China or Russia. It was taken to be simply a statement of obvious fact that the USA did just as it pleased in the world, and was bound by no laws, rules or conventions. That state of affairs was accepted, apparently without thought, as the necessary condition of Freedom.

President Obama also said that the USA should begin to reduce its commitment to the flimsy fragment of Freedom it had established in Afghanistan in order to begin nation-building at home. We did not get quite what he had in mind in the way of nation-building at home. Presumably it was the complete integration of the descendants of the black slaves who were emancipated 160 years ago.

The great Emancipator, Lincoln, did not intend that the freed slaves

should become American citizens. He intended sending them back 'home'—as if they were still Africans after the intensive re-making they had undergone in America.

A Jacobin element in Congress in the mid-1860s disagreed fundamentally with Lincoln in the matter. They set about penalising the defeated slave owners and establishing the freed slaves in political command of a number of Southern States. The White Anglo Saxon Protestants in those states—the founders of the United States—asserted themselves through the Ku Klux Klan and reduced the blacks to actual subjugation without the legal formality of slavery.

Woodrow Wilson, the great Democrat President who saved Britain (and Home Rule Ireland) from losing the War they had launched on Germany, hailed the Ku Klux Klan in 1918 as saviours of the Union—which would not have survived a transformation of the Confederacy from Slave states to states ruled by freed black slaves. There was no substantial disagreement with that view.

The informal subjugation of blacks by whites lasted for a century after legal Emancipation. Practical Emancipation has now been going on for sixty years. It seems to be a zig-zag development: the Democrats—the Slave party in the Civil War—contributing to it by patronage, and the Republicans contributing to it by insisting that the descendants of the slaves should acquire the robust qualities of the WASP founders.

The Free World Waits

The United States is the only indispensable nation. The world cannot exist without it. It is therefore absolutely necessary that it should give absolute priority to its own well-being, putting the world on 'hold' while it does so. The world, at least the part of it that calls itself Free, can have no legitimate complaint about this. It abased itself before the USA two generations ago. It looks to the USA to be told what Freedom is.

If the USA is going through a moment of uncertainty, then the rest of the Free World must wait patiently until it recovers its equipoise. It cannot be Free independently on its own terms. The two World Wars waged by the British Empire against Germany destroyed its capacity for that.

Britain's great achievement in the first half of the 20th century was to destroy European civilisation by destroying the institutions through which it existed.

Home Rule Ireland took part in the first assault in 1914. Independent Ireland refused to take part in the second assault of 1939, but in its official intellectual life it failed to describe the consequential course of events from its independent viewpoint. It is now as European as if it had joined the War on the losing side and been rendered mindless by it.

Britain, as guarantor of the Versailles Treaty, collaborated actively with Hitler in the 1930s, enabling him to break its terms. It facilitated him in establishing Germany as the hegemonic Power in Eastern Europe in the Fall of 1938, a few months before capriciously deciding to make war on it in the Spring of 1939. It lost the first battle in the early Summer of 1940 and withdrew its army from the battlefield but, with its world-conquering Navy, it refused to negotiate an end to the War. It kept the War going with minimal commitment until it led to a German invasion of Russia. Russia, in the course of defending itself, fought its way into central Europe. American entry into the War at the end of 1941 obliged Britain to send an army back into France in the Summer of 1944, while the bulk of the German forces were engaged against Russia. This resulted in the Anglo-American Occupation of France, Italy and part of Germany in 1945.

The region of Anglo-American Occupation was called Free Europe, though it was entirely dependent on the USA militarily, economically, and politically. The area under Russian Occupation was described as having been liberated by Russia—until Russia had destroyed the German State. It was then described as having been conquered and subjugated tyrannically by Russia.

If Russia had offered Germany a deal when it reached its own frontier of 1941, and Hitler had accepted, it seems probable that the Nazi regime would have been a component of post-War Europe. That regime arose out of the failure of text-book democracy to cope with the condition of Europe brought about by Britain in its First World War, and it was soundly-based. The Western nightmare was that Stalin would make "*a separate peace*". He did not do so. He ensured the destruction of the Nazi regime, and that meant grinding it into the dust against fierce opposition in Berlin itself.

The force with which the Anglo-American world—which from that point

on should be called the *Ameranglian world*—could not live was not Fascism, but Communism.

British Imperial democracy had incompetently got itself into a World War against Fascism and was saved from defeat by Communism.

That was paradoxical and intolerable and British history has never been able to come to terms with it.

It was clearly visible from the vantage point of independent Ireland that this was the case. Everybody could see it! But the Universities were already in tutelage to Oxbridge and therefore what everybody could see was never expressed intellectually.

Restored To History?

Christian Democracy was the only viable democratic force that maintained itself with a substantial degree of integrity through the Fascist period. It got Europe going again out of the ruins, under American protection. Britain found that philosophy unintelligible and expected it to fail. When it succeeded, and threatened to carry Europe out of the range of British balance-of-power understanding, Britain joined it with the object of diverting it from its original purpose.

Christian Democracy was subverted by a series of trivial 'Corruption' scandals; Britain made itself central to European politics, encouraging greater market competition and random expansion—but failing to prevent the establishment of a European currency.

It then decided that the best way of damaging the EU was to get out of it, leaving it with a sense of loss of purpose, and manipulate its discontents from outside.

The historic British purpose towards Europe has been to keep it divided and in conflict with itself, and therefore 'free'. *Europe divided is Europe free* might be its slogan! It aligned itself against any strong nation that seemed capable of making a European settlement.

The Christian Democratic founders of what became the EU were well aware of the nature of Britain's interest in Europe and were determined to counter it. Britain was baffled by Christian Democracy, and had difficulty getting to grips with it. But it got there in the end.

Post-Christian Democratic Europe, bereft of the British presence within it, does not know what it is—beyond the latest fashion in political correctness.

The major states of Eastern Europe have exited into history. The Communist system into which they were re-organised after 1945 assumed an 'end of history' in the sense of the ending of class-based internal disruption, driven by the ever-expanding requirements of Capitalism. The post-War system assumed that what people wanted was to settle down matter-of-factly under conditions which gave them useful employment and the means of living moderately well and raising a family and entertaining themselves. They had in a sense been taken out of

history after 1945. And the Power that broke Fascism had taken responsibility for them and had not required them collectively to deal with what they had done in the Fascist era.

After 45 years they were returned to history, and their ambitious spirits were eager to live in it. This has brought them into conflict with the West European masters of the EU who have been debilitated by their very different experiences since 1945. And Ireland, having made its own history into a nightmare, is pitted against them.

so she was banging all the doors in her journey down the long corridor.

Guests of different nationalities were out shouting at her. She stopped and then shuffled off, with one leg longer than the other because of the scrubbing brush. Then she was back with what looked like the rest of the cleaning staff. They were holding a meeting and we were warned in German and English that we might have to leave the hotel if we didn't give them the respect they were entitled to.

The old quarter of Warsaw had been razed to the ground by the German in WW2, but here it was back from the dead! Every stone, every brick had been taken from the rubble and the area now looked as if there had been no war, with its cobbled streets, old street signs, small shops and a busy market. It was saying Poland hadn't died.

Later in the morning, I enquired at the reception desk about the way to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. I made the mistake of adding: '*Where so many Jews died*'. She went into what I took to be a fit, probably cursing me in Polish, and shouting in English that Catholics and Soviet POWs had died there in their thousands. She wanted to know my name and then she looked it up on the register.

I thought I would be asked to leave the hotel. Then she calmed down but didn't apologise.

Auschwitz was a nightmare, with its bales of human hair, mounds of shoes and cremation ovens with half-burnt skulls and other bone. In passing through Germany, I had visited Belsen. It was neat and tidy with no evidence anyone had died there.

It took me until quite recently to the read 1979 novel, *Sophie's Choice*, by William Styron, an American. I hadn't read it earlier because I was under the impression that the heroine was Jewish and this was going to be the usual pro-Zionist stuff. In fact Sophie is a Polish Catholic who has survived Auschwitz. Visiting a farm outside Warsaw, she buys a ham from a farmer. Coming back to Warsaw, her bus is raided by the German SS. Any meat available in the whole of Poland was only for the German Army of occupation.

In the camp it is discovered she speaks and writes excellent German, and she becomes a secretary to the Camp Commandant. But her prisoner status still has her living in a cupboard in the basement and eating left-overs from the

Wilson John Haire

Communist Poland

In The 1960s

I was surprised to learn, after reading an article by John Wear, highlighted in *Irish Foreign Affairs*, Volume 14, Number 3, that pre-war Poland had one million Germans living within its borders, not counting the over-whelming German population of Danzig. The history of Germans in Poland dates back a millennium. More recently, a census in Poland in 2002 put the number at almost 153,000.

I visited communist Poland in the mid-1960s, sharing the driving of a Volkswagen, with a partner. We had had stones thrown at us, driving from what was then West Germany into Czechoslovakia, after having dined at—as we discovered later—was a Nazi-themed pub, on the German side. The mainly male drinkers had been in the middle of a rousing martial air when we entered, and stopped abruptly at our appearance. They remained glaring and sullen all the time we were there, and we thought it better to get out as soon as possible.

The crossing into Czechoslovakia brought a hail of stones upon the Volkswagen, thrown by what looked like teenagers. We seemed to be German to them. Luckily no glass was broken. There were no barriers or customs at the border, but, along the country road, a red light flashed and soldiers appeared in the road with fixed bayonets. Glimpsed through the trees was an ambush site of a heavy machine-gun position.

They also weren't too happy at the sight of the Volkswagen. But after examining our passports they cheered up.

Then it was on to Prague for a few days and then Warsaw. This was Poland and I thought driving a Volkswagen wasn't a good idea. One fifth of the Polish population had been killed under German occupation, numbering six million people. We were going through villages and towns that had been devastated. But, stopping off to eat or drink at small restaurants, we were welcomed in German, after they saw the Volkswagen.

I kept thinking this was to do with commercial transactions like paying for meals and staying in bed & breakfast. Later I was to discover that WW2 was a mere blip to them, that German was widely spoken.

The Poles were the nearest people to the Irish, I felt, they were generally friendly and liked to enjoy themselves. The Czechs on the other hand seem more English in their manners of reserve and aloofness. A Czech policeman, checking our destination, described Warsaw as '*The Wild East*' (as in the Wild West)!

The large hotel, in Warsaw, seemed to be controlled by the cleaners. At 4 am: a dreadful banging noise in the corridor. Looking out, an elderly woman had what looked like a scrubbing brush attached to her foot. She was cleaning where the walls connected to floors and in doing

commandant's family table.

When arrested, she had two young children with her, who also end up in Auschwitz. Her choice is which child will go to the gas chamber and which one will be allowed to survive. Another dilemma for her is finding what is happening to the surviving child, who has been put in the children's section. She wonders how she can get the commandant to enquire. He never does and she never learns the fate of her child.

Her father, also a German speaker, who had studied in Germany pre-War, had written a long article on why National Socialism would be good for Poland, pre-War. She had kept the article hidden in her shoe when taken to Auschwitz. Now she wants to curry favour with the Commandant and shows the letter to him. He reads it with disinterest and more or less says it is all too late, the Poles have been designated sub-humans. Her father is already dead. During a round-up by the Germans, at the University where he lectured, he is shot out-of-hand, along with the other Professors.

Sophie, after the Liberation by the Soviet Red Army ends up in America. Her boyfriend is a deranged New York Jew who has no respect for her suffering background and beats the hell out of her.

*

It was Saturday night, in Warsaw, I was wondering how to get away from my partner to have a drink, as she was strictly non-alcohol. Looking out of the window on the third floor, I noticed a policeman on a motorcycle which had a wide, low platform, in place of a sidecar. I wondered what this was for until it stopped and the cop got off to roll a prone man, lying in the street, on to the platform and drive off.

In half an hour he was back to again roll yet another prone drunk man on to the platform and drive off. That made me feel like I really needed a drink now, so I invited my partner to a ye olde Polish pub, in ye olde section of Warsaw, for a bit of culture. She declined saying she didn't want to have to book a police platform for me.

I left the hotel anyway and found a pub nearby. It looked like the Polish army was on manoeuvres. I couldn't move to get to the bar-counter for the AK-47s, they were swinging and pointing in all directions. I was afraid one of them would go off, so I went to the cafe next door, hoping the army would go away.

It was a different environment

entirely: well-dressed people, looking middle-class as they drank their coffee and ate their imported Austrian pastry. Sitting at the same table was a Polish Countess of the old aristocracy. She made no apologies for identifying herself as such and said I probably wanted to meet the *all* people. She was wondering what I thought of Poland and wanted to put me right about a few things. First of all, she could travel anywhere in the world she chose to be in, like many Poles who wanted to travel abroad. She owned a flat in Tufnell Park, London, and spent half her life there. She was an antique jewellery dealer and plied her trade in London.

She had a teenage son and, as a result of her former social position, was not high up in social points. This meant her son didn't get to go to University in Poland when there were others further down the social scale waiting to go. Now he was in London studying. She said she wasn't being critical only giving the facts. She understood what was happening and didn't blame the Polish Government.

(Whereas Soviet citizens generally couldn't travel abroad, the Poles could. A friend of mine was staying in a house in West Hampstead owned by an elderly Polish couple whose son regularly came from Poland to renovate their house. This couple, like many other Polish Jews, had been taken to Siberia during the *Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact*, under which the Red Army took back territory lost during the Polish/Soviet War—which had been initiated by Leon Trotsky from late Autumn 1920 to 18th March, 1921, during his permanent-revolution notions.

The couple said life was difficult, timber-cutting in the forests. But there were also good times, like being shown how to fish properly by a Russian guard—any shiny object at the end of a string caught the Siberian fish. The man was then given the choice of joining the Red Army or joining a Polish Brigade within the Red Army, but somehow ended up in a Polish unit within the British Army and fought in Italy.

His wife was released back to Poland after the Red Army swept through it. She couldn't live in Poland anymore, as all her family and relatives had been murdered by the Nazis. The same fate befell her husband's family, and he too was never to go back to Poland.

When I got back to the hotel my partner told me the Volkswagen had been broken into in the car park, while I was

out *boozing*. I countered this by saying I was in fact having a coffee with a Polish countess, and I had been invited to meet her the next time she came to London. Luckily this claim made me seem in a fantasy with the booze.

I examined the Volkswagen. The door had been prised open and a suitcase of my partner's spare clothing was missing. I then went to reception and, woe and behold, it was the same receptionist. She phoned the police and they soon arrived shouting: *KRIMINAALS!* My glossy brochure on Poland, which I had read in London, said there was no need to worry about *Kriminaals*, or to give tips in restaurants: that those of the People's Democratic Republic of Poland didn't expect tips; and that the People's police saw to it that there would be no crime.

The receptionist was now bossing the police around. She seemed to be more than a receptionist and most likely held a high position in the Communist Party. She took me to an office and began to grill me on the amount of clothing missing and its cost. When I told her what the clothing cost, according to my partner, she took on the *persona* of a character from a Hollywood anti-Communist film, identifying herself as a Colonel in the UB—counter intelligence. (I have looked it up but it's in a long Polish sentence.) She declared that, even in capitalist England, female clothing couldn't be at the prices I mentioned. I said they could even cost much more than that!

She just wasn't happy about the car break-in so near to the hotel, which was in central Warsaw, and probably a hub for anti-espionage tactics. She might even have suspected I had staged it in order to test security.

I decided to play my only hand and produced my CPGB card. She looked at it and wrote down the details and told me to sit in the lobby. She was gone about half an hour. When she came back she threw my party card at me and laughed—was it cynically? I didn't think the CPGB counted for much in Poland. Maybe that let-down by Britain, during WW2, and their ill-advice on Danzig was on her mind.

I just had to get out of Warsaw. We drove to Lodz, another most tragic city of WW2. Parking and looking for a hotel, I noticed a man's body lying on the pavement surrounded by temporary railings and a large notice in Polish. Trying to figure it out, a young man sidled up and explained in English that, when someone was killed on the roads there by a vehicle, the body was left in the street

for four days as a warning to drivers.

He then invited us back to his house. I persuaded my partner to accept this invitation because tourists are mostly on the outside of a country and this was an opportunity to see the inside for a change. It was quite a nice house in a nice area. It definitely wasn't a working-class house. His equally young wife was feeding a pup, which was wearing a baby's bib, with a baby's bottle full of milk. There was an elderly grandmother there whom we were told to ignore as she had decided to go to Canada and live with her eldest grandson, his brother.

We were given a meal and then the man invited us out to a club. My partner didn't drink so refused to come along with me. Her idea was that I shouldn't go out with him either. But I did. We got a taxi and after a short journey he told the driver to stop. He told me to wait and he knocked on the door of the club. The answer was a fist coming out and hitting him on the chin. He fell over and got to his feet, to enter the taxi again. The taxi-driver put his head on the steering wheel and groaned. He had obviously seen this man's antics before. I had no choice but to stay with him as I wouldn't be able to find my way back to where I had left my partner.

The taxi-driver spoke no English, and I no Polish, so he couldn't understand when I asked him to take me back to where he had picked us up.

The taxi took off again. I now realised this young man in his early twenties was drunk. He stopped the taxi again and approached a policeman. After talking to him a while he motioned for me to leave the taxi, but to pay the driver first. The policeman then led us to a club and we went upstairs. I didn't, back then, drink vodka, or any spirits but a couple of pints of beer or lager. There was no beer so it was strong Polish vodka. Normally, those who drink, might have wine with their meals but I noticed in Poland it was vodka with meals. I thought it couldn't be that strong.

I remember being vaguely told my drinking companion, maybe after an hour, that the policeman was downstairs still waiting for his money. I was half-drunkenly spouting some terrible jargon like the people's police of Poland don't take bribes. The young man disappeared instantly, as did the policeman.

I wandered the streets of Lodz wondering where I had left my partner. Crossing the road I felt the mirror of a speeding truck strike my head and I was knocked to the ground. People

just walked past me as they crossed the road, vehicles circled round me. I was just another four-day-case, I supposed, looking back.

Like so many Polish cities, it had been a city of constant death during WW2. I was without my passport or much money, as I had entrusted all to her before leaving. I was now in the centre of the city and noticed a familiar looking Volkswagen parked in the street. I decided to have a look in at a nearby hotel. I had struck the right place and discovered my partner in the lobby. The usual conversation—*"were you going to leave me in Poland without my passport and fare back to London?"* Yes, indeed she was!

I was on a male pub-crawl like a coal-miner or a building worker—(I was a building worker)—without inviting her. But I had! It might have been better if she had come along. Her story was that my drinking *pal* returned without me and had tried to rob her and rape her, despite his wife being there, and with the grandmother screaming. She had fled after knocking him to the floor.

In the meantime my head bled, which amused the hotel manager. He left and came back with a bottle of iodine and poured it on the cut, taking the handkerchief out of pocket he dabbed it and laughed some more.

It was now a drive back to Prague the next morning with her complaining to the Czech border police that Poland was indeed *'The Wild East'*. They all agreed with a smirk. I liked Poland. Its people were tragic but not gloomy. They opened up their hotel lobbies and dining rooms to anyone who cared to enter, unlike the similar top London hotels. Generally people were polite and well-mannered in an old-fashioned European way.

There was the Palace of Culture, in Warsaw, built by the Soviet Union, and sneered at in the Western media as looking like some crude and mad concrete wedding cake. It had a proper full orchestra for the old Polish dances and was attended by the population of different generations. Only for the glossy propaganda brochures in London I would have been more on my guard, instead, I was made to feel naive.

Back home, a few days later, my partner entertained a couple of Americans visiting London. They were members of the CPUSA and had visited Poland. Their verdict: Peasants were running it now. (The middle-class had been killed

during WW2?) They weren't aware I was a building site worker. I didn't put up a counter-argument, so I could get to hear their views.

Another thing they said was that they had been let down by the workers during the McCarthy HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee). As people in the UK are said to be one-issue voters, like voting against immigration or because of a party's housing policy, these two people were in the party because of the Soviet fight and victory over Fascism, an admirable sentiment but most other issues didn't interest them. They had financial security, good jobs and good housing.

All they wanted now was a better working-class they could communicate with.

14.9. 2021

Donal Kennedy

Naming!

Mary O'Rourke has suggested that Dublin Airport be named after *Sean Lemass* whose many services to Ireland included the establishment of Aer Lingus (see *Irish Times*, early June). I'd warmly support the idea. But "*Lemass Airport*". would be more in keeping with the man's style, short and to the point.

This week has witnessed the first mid-air refuelling of a manned aircraft from an unmanned drone.

Some of the first re-fuellings, if not the very first, were over the Shannon in the 1930s and some of Mr Lemass's colleagues, including his Chief, were physically and hair-raisingly involved.

I quote—

"The British were also experimenting with refuelling in the air, Sir Alan Cobham had been a pioneer of this novel but dangerous experiment. I was present with my father to see such an operation carried out. A land plane based at Rineanna, a 'Harrow bomber', was converted into a tanker. 'Canopus' one of the Short flying boats, was due to be refuelled in the air, and then set out on its transatlantic flight...

We were driven to Rineanna to see the Harrow made ready. As we stood around in a group one of the British officials thought it would be a good idea if my father and his party were to view the operation from the air.

My father was very reticent. He thought we were going up in the Har-

row, or the aircraft being refuelled and he knew well the risks and great dangers of the operation. Sean Lydon... quickly reassured him neither he or his party would be aboard either of the planes in the operation. Lydon was a trusted and indispensable help and friend to Sean Lemass...

We made our way back to Foynes and took a motor launch to the Short flying boat, Maia, which had been stripped of all its seats and internal fittings and sat on the bare hull. There were no safety straps."

To summarise: the Maia was captured by a senior officer of Imperial Airways and an Australian Colleague who became an Air Vice Marshal in the British Airforce.

The narrator was *Terry*, the teenage son of Eamon, de Valera, and the passengers were Frank Aiken, Oscar Traynor and his young son Colm, as well as Sean Lydon.

The Maia, banked to observe the mid air fuelling, almost colliding with the tanker and half the Irish Cabinet, two of their teenage sons, and a senior Civil Servant were thrown about on top of each other.

Sean Lemass was part of a team and not the only one with a close interest in the development of air transport.

Perhaps Shannon Airport should be named Shannon De Valera Airport.

And Knock Airport, one of the many successful projects which was supported by Charles Haughey should be named after him.

Forget the Begrudgers and commemorate De Valera and Haughey, who, like Lemass, were driving forces in the modernisation of Ireland.

Donal Kennedy

removed organs, without anesthesia of course. Just to see how much pain his victims could endure.' There's only one problem here. Heim is believed to have killed around 300 people *total*. The majority of his victims were not Spanish Republicans—though certainly some were—but included other populations in the camp, notably Poles and Jews. (Heim had a particular hatred for the last category, and maintained his virulence throughout his life)... Marsé's descriptions of Heim's sadistic surgeries are accurate to survivor testimony. So is his account of a vivisection of two young men whose skulls he later boiled and kept; left unsaid is the fact that those two men were not Spanish, as is implied, but Dutch Jews..."

"This mistake is unfortunate, as there is a sort of noble *raison d'être* to this stylized, sometimes sensitive, series. Its mission is expressed most clearly by the character of Lucena, a survivor of Auschwitz. Seated before the figures in the firing squad of Goya's *El Tres de Mayo* at the Museo del Prado, Lucena laments to his handler the obscurity of the Spanish dead. 'What they did to the Spaniards in Germany mustn't be forgotten. Nobody knows about the thousands of Spaniards who died there nor about whose fault it was.' It's a point well made. The deaths of 4,427 Spanish Republicans in Mauthausen are overlooked—and even suppressed—history. The names of the dead were only made public by the Spanish government in 2019. The reason for what scholar Robert Wheatley called 'a cover up' by Franco's regime... But changing the demographics of the majority of Heim's victims—even because of an ad lib or a flubbed line—gives primacy to Spanish victims when their real suffering needs little embellishment. (It goes without saying that any misrepresentation of fact surrounding the Shoah is always catnip for deniers)... But in presenting an account of victimhood, facts shouldn't be fudged either by actor error or script—especially when they downplay the suffering of others."

I am inclined to agree with Grisar that poetic licence should not be taken with such facts. Unlike camps like Auschwitz and Treblinka, Mauthausen was not an extermination camp, but a forced labour camp, whose victims primarily perished from being worked to death. A total of 38,120 Jewish victims perished in Mauthausen, as did 22,100 Poles, 2,800 Soviet prisoners of war, and 7,400 from a combination of 24 nationalities.

Manus O'Riordan

We publish below Manus' last article written for this magazine. Readers are invited to send any tributes to Manus to our sister magazine, *Irish Political Review*
via the email address: athol-st@atholbooks.org

Holocaust Facts Matter And None Should Be Denied

Accuracy required on its Jewish, Communist and Spanish Republican victims.

As Pastor Martin Niemöller put it:

"First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Communist
Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist
Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a trade unionist
Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew
Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me.

On 21st September 2021, *For-*

ward, which was founded in New York as a Yiddish Socialist newspaper in 1897, published an article by its culture reporter, P.J. Grisar, entitled "*Netflix's Holocaust revenge drama changes the facts—is nationalism to blame, or just an actor's mistake?*" He argued:

"As villains go, you can't do much better than the one at the center of Netflix's latest, a man called 'Doctor Death'. In *Jaguar*, a crew of Spanish Holocaust survivors in 1960s Madrid hunt down Aribert Heim, a real-life Nazi physician who escaped justice for nearly half a century. 'He was a doctor at Mauthausen', the character Marsé ... says of Heim. 'While he was there he tortured more than 300 Spaniards. He gave them injections of water, phenol and petroleum in the heart to see how long before they died. He operated and

If Grisar had carefully read down the link he gave for an article on 9th August 2019 in the English edition of the Spanish newspaper *'El País'*, he would have seen that 695 additional names had been added, bringing to 5,122 the number of Spanish victims who perished in Mauthausen, amounting to half of the Spanish Republicans imprisoned there:

“For years, the names of the 4,427 Spaniards who died in the Nazi concentration camp, Mauthausen-Gusen, were tucked away inside several old books in the headquarters of the Central Civil Registry on Madrid’s Montera street. But on Friday, the Spanish government released the data on all the Spanish Mauthausen victims in the Official State Bulletin (BOE), meaning names, places of birth and dates of death can be linked to the thousands of personal stories of the Republicans who fought in two wars and ended up in a concentration camp... Six hundred and ninety-five names have been added to the 4,427 found in the books after historians, funded by associations such as the Amical de Mauthausen (Friends of Mauthausen), embarked on an investigation in a bid to put names to all the Spanish victims of the Nazi genocide, including those who ended up in other camps... It has been 74 years since the Republican prisoners welcomed US troops with an enormous banner that read: *‘The anti-fascist Spaniards salute the liberating forces.’* Nearly 10,000 Spaniards were sent to concentration camps located in the vicinity of Mauthausen in Austria, where they were used as slave labor in the granite quarries. Around half of these prisoners lived to tell the tale, but the names of those who did not survive the terrible conditions have remained under wraps until now. In 1951, Spanish authorities received a series of records from France, with the identity, dates of birth and dates of death of the deceased citizens in the camps, above all in Mauthausen-Gusen... Most of the victims were Republicans who had crossed the border into France in the last months of the Spanish Civil War and who became part of French Resistance. There were also women and children from the refugee camps in the south of France. When France fell under Nazi rule with Philippe Pétain as chief of state of Vichy France, these Republicans were taken to Austria on the suggestion of the Franco regime; Franco’s governing minister and brother in law, Ramón Serrano-Suñer, struck an agreement with the Nazis that all their Spanish prisoners of war should be taken to labor camps...”

Facts do indeed matter. Grisar takes

issue with the liberties Netflix has taken. But no less an institution than the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has also played fast and loose with at least one historical fact about Nazi Germany. The following is excerpted from my article in *Irish Foreign Affairs*, March 2016, on my lighting of a candle in memory of its political victims at the 2016 Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration in Dublin, as my partner Nancy Wallach would also do in 2018.

“Is a ‘Little’ Holocaust Denial at a Holocaust Museum OK? —Lest we forget: ‘First They Came for the Communists’

In lighting a candle for the political victims on January 24 at this year’s (2016) Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration in Dublin, I wore two emblems—that of the International Brigades in the Spanish Anti-Fascist War of 1936-1939, and a commemorative badge in memory of the German Communist Party leader Ernst Thälmann (1886-1944), imprisoned in solitary confinement for eleven years by the Nazi regime, from his arrest in 1933 until his execution in Buchenwald concentration camp, on 18 August 1944. I was also mindful of the following home truths embodied in that poem based on a sermon by the German Lutheran Pastor Martin Niemöller: *“First they came for the Communists ...”*

But why does the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) censor Niemöller in this regard? For it is that Museum which must be held responsible for quite deliberately spreading a lie in the USA, that Niemöller began his statement with the sentence: *“First they came for the Socialists”*—and for compounding the offence by omitting any reference whatsoever to Communists in its ‘quotation’!

Many US Facebook posts towards the end of 2015 reacted against the racist incitement statements of US Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump, by proclaiming, in these or similar words: *“First they came for the Mexicans, now they come for the Muslims, and I will not be silent ...”*, echoing the powerful anti-Nazi confessional statement of Pastor Martin Niemöller. To echo such an inspiring statement is perfectly legitimate and appropriate, for it does not pretend to be directly quoting the original historic statement itself, but is recasting it for modern times. Yet some of those posts, having been misled by the USHMM, went on to quote its false version of

what Niemöller had actually said.

So, what are we to say when such a Memorial deliberately distorts History and Truth itself? In 1999 I visited Washington DC for an economics conference, in my capacity as a member of the *Economic Committee of the European Trade Union Confederation*. While there, I took the opportunity to visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It was, for the most part, an extremely moving experience. But then I came across the false quotation that filled me with intense anger. For I had been aware since my 1960s teens that Niemöller had explicitly stated that *“first they came for the Communists”*.

Seeing now that the false USHMM version has prevailed throughout the USA, I have been prompted to visit the USHMM’s own website, to find the following lame attempt at a ‘justification’ for its lie:

“Martin Niemöller (1892-1984) was a prominent Protestant pastor who emerged as an outspoken public foe of Adolf Hitler and spent the last seven years of Nazi rule in concentration camps. Niemöller is perhaps best remembered for the quotation:

‘First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out— Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out— Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.’

“The quotation stems from Niemöller’s lectures during the early postwar period. Different versions of the quotation exist. These can be attributed to the fact that Niemöller spoke extemporaneously and in a number of settings. Much controversy surrounds the content of the poem as it has been printed in varying forms, referring to diverse groups such as Catholics, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Jews, Trade Unionists, or Communists depending upon the version. Nonetheless his point was that Germans—in particular, he believed, the leaders of the Protestant churches—had been complicit through their silence in the Nazi imprisonment, persecution, and murder of millions of people.”

But a wikiquote website entry on Niemöller gives the lie to such USHMM obfuscation, and establishes that in his very first sermon along these lines, Niemöller clearly identified the



Spanish Republican prisoners in Mauthausen concentration camp saluting their liberators.

Communists as the first victims of the Nazis:

“The origins of this poem first have been traced to a speech given by Niemöller on January 6, 1946, to the representatives of the Confessing Church in Frankfurt. According to research by Harold Marcuse, the original groups mentioned in the speech were Communists, the incurably sick, Jews, and people in occupied countries. Since then, the contents have often been altered to produce numerous variants. Niemöller himself came up with different versions, depending on the year. The most famous and well known alterations are perhaps those beginning ‘First they came for the Jews’... Other translations or variants: **‘In Germany, they came first for the Communists, And I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist; And then they came for the trade unionists, And I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist; And then they came for the Jews, And I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Jew; And then . . . they came for me . . . And by that time there was no one left to speak up.’** Twenty-five years later Niemöller indicated that this was the version he preferred, in a 1971 interview.”

Holocaust denial is indeed a heinous phenomenon, especially the attempt to deny that, as World War Two developed

following the 1941 Nazi invasion of the USSR, it had set out to accomplish the genocidal extermination of Jews and Roma. But was not the US Holocaust Memorial Museum engaging in a 'little' Holocaust denial itself, with its own Niemöller lie, for the purpose of denying that Communists were Nazi Germany’s first victims?

This Museum shamefully surrendered to the remnants of the anti-Com-

munist hysteria that had characterised the McCarthyite period of the Cold War, so well depicted recently in that 2015 movie about the Hollywood Ten, *“Trumbo”*, when, once again, they indeed *“first came for the Communists”*, including 'premature' anti-Fascist International Brigade volunteers, and did not hesitate to use the anti-Semitic term of abuse “Kikes” to describe those Jews among the targets of that US post-War “Red” scare.

WHEN A WHITE FLAG IS NOT SURRENDER

Peace reigns when you stop abusing the world,
when every victim is equal to you,
when devastated families you rue,
when you acknowledge those bombs you have hurled,
costing billions, killed the dollar-a-day
of a culture you wouldn’t recognise,
neo-liberalism they did despise,
despite poverty and huts made of clay.
The West licks its wounds over 9/11,
licks forever, never wants it to heal,
their mutilated dead stir in heaven,
they shall be ridden back to the battlefield,
some, mount up as the Samurai Seven,
others, against their will will one day yield.

Wilson John Haire. 13th September, 2021.

V O X

President Higgins Penal Days Catholic School Population The Year 1851 Fairy Tales?

P A T

“POPE FRANCIS has described President Michael D. Higgins as a "wise man of today" during an Audience in the Vatican on Friday morning.

President Higgins met the Pontiff for the fourth time on Friday and discussed issues including climate change, environment and global inequality.

During the formal photo-call, the Pope said:

“Today, I did not just meet a man, a President, I met a wise man of today.

“I thank God that Ireland has such a wise man as its Head (of State)” (Irish Times, 17.9.2021).

PENAL DAYS:

They bribed the flock, they bribed the son,
To sell the priest and rob the sire;
Their dogs were taught alike to run
Upon the scent of wolf and friar . . .

(Thomas Davis-1814-1845:
“*The Penal Days*”-1842

HEDGE-SCHOOLS: During the Penal period, when Catholic education was suppressed, an Independent system of basic first and second level education, known as “*hedge schools*”, spread throughout Ireland.

At its height between the years 1700 and 1850, an official enquiry in 1713 revealed that there were some 560 ‘Papist’ schools (most of them illegal) functioning in every diocese in Ireland except Derry. A survey 1824 showed there were 9,300 hedge-schools with 400,000 pupils. When the national school system was introduced c.1830 the hedge schools went into decline; however, the last of them lingered on until the beginning of the twentieth century in Connacht.

Although the term “*hedge-school*” connoted contempt, the standard of education provided by the best of them could be high. Among those who attended the

“hedge-school” were: Oliver Goldsmith, who left a memorable account of his village schoolmaster in *The Deserted Village*; Edmund Rice, who founded the Christian Brothers in 1820; Eoghan Rua O Suilleabhain, the Jacobite poet, who set up a school; William Carleton, the novelist, both a pupil and a master; and Edmund Burke’s maternal relations.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL!

“A STAUNCHLY Catholic independent parent-run private school, the first of its kind in Ireland, is hoping to move into the Dominican Centre on Pope’s Quay, according to a planning application lodged with Cork City Council by the Dominican Order” (Irish Examiner, 2.9.2021) .

The Mater Dei Academy, based on an education model, has been operating out of a premises on Ferry Lane, near St Mary’s Church, for the past year.

A letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Academy, Pádraig Cantillon-Murphy, in support of the ‘change of use’ planning application, says the school was founded in 2020 “*to provide Catholic education in the classical tradition to girls and boys in Munster*”.

The Academy was set up by Mr Cantillon-Murphy and his wife Grace, with the support of the local Dominican community, according to The Saints and Scholars Foundation, an organisation with an address in the US, with links to the Academy. The Foundation was set up in response to the “*ongoing de-Christianisation of Ireland*” and its stated mission is the restoration of Catholic Education in Ireland, through “*independent, lay-controlled Catholic schools that are faithful to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church*”.

Mater Dei Academy says on its website that it is “*the beating heart for a*

new missionary pulse which seeks to revitalise Irish and European society with the values and traditions of our Catholic forefathers”. It adds that Ireland has undergone “*unprecedented constitutional and social change*” over the past decade with an impact on state-funded Catholic education and “*rapidly declining academic standards*”. In response to this “*crisis*” Mater Dei Academy “*is the new paradigm for independent, Catholic, second level education in Ireland*”, it says.

Cork City Council is due to decide on the application by October 14.

POPULATION: Population in the Republic tops 5m for the first time since 1851.

5,011,500 estimated resident population.
4,365,900 nationals (87.1%)

645,500 non-nationals (12.9%)

1,426,000 population of Dublin (28.5% of population.

742,300 persons 65 and over, an increase of 112,500 (17.9%) since 2016.

11,200 net Migration to April, 2021.

54,000 emigrants; 65,200 immigrants.

Migration of Irish nationals:

30,200 returned; 22,800 departed

THE YEAR 1851

* Irish members of Parliament form the Catholic Defence Association to oppose new laws curtailing the rights of the Catholic hierarchy—they are dubbed “the Pope’s Brass Band.”

* A free medical care system is provided through plans to establish dispensaries throughout Ireland.

* The Young Irelander, Terence Bellew McManus escapes from Van Diemen’s Land to the U.S.A.

* Anne Devlin, former housekeeper to Robert Emmet died of impoverishment.

FAIRY TALES ?

“The newly-elected leader of the DUP is of the opinion that the world is 6,000 years old. That is a ridiculous opinion based on a book of fictitious tales. In this scientific age we know the world is a lot older than that. So how old is it? No figure springs to mind.

Science has been unable to find a beginning to anything but some local changes in our immediate neighbourhood. It has been unable to find a beginning of the whole thing. And, if a beginning cannot be found, the opinion that the universe had no beginning because it was always there arises naturally, even in the most advanced

scientific minds. And, if it was always there, then it has no age. The philosopher Kant gave the matter some serious thought a couple of centuries ago and concluded that the opinions that the world had a beginning or that it had no beginning were equally absurd. And, in that case, the matter is not worth thinking about. It gets you nowhere in the end. And, in current affairs, a belief in 6,000 years is certainly no more disabling than a belief in 6,000 billion years, or in infinity.

The only relevance of the 6,000

years is its indication that Bible Christianity remains a constant orientating belief in Unionist Ulster after 400 years of existence, while Roman Christianity, established by Cardinal Cullen in Nationalist Ireland, has collapsed after less than two centuries without being replaced by any other orientating world view. (*Irish Political Review*, June, 2021)

[In June, 2021, Edwin Poots surrendered his office after 3 weeks]

Stephen Richards

The Bible In Spain

Part Three

Borrow's Encounters

There's a passage in L.P. Hartley's trilogy, *Eustace And Hilda* that has always stuck with me. According to his Oxford tutor, Eustace has never quite fulfilled his potential, and the reason is that he's less interested in the subject matter than in what he can make of it.

That passage should be inscribed in letters of gold above every writer's desk, and on the wall of every university humanities faculty. There really is no substitute for being interested in stuff for its own sake. Not that Borrow in his ramblings in 1830s Spain isn't interested in himself and in cutting an impressive figure, but he doesn't let that interfere with his need to understand what is going on around him. As he comments early in his narrative, the dominant feature of his character is an insatiable curiosity about his fellow men.

Champagne With Laurie

Almost exactly a hundred years later, another young Englishman set out for Spain, also at a time of civil war, and left us his memories. I was happy enough with Laurie Lee's *Cider With Rosie*, but for some reason I was allergic to *As I Walked Out*. I couldn't read it again even for money. It's possible that Borrow is simply a more convincing liar than Lee, and I'm sure that at times he juxtaposes disparate incidents for effect. And I suppose all writers are liars to a greater or lesser extent. But all the same, Borrow's

narrative has an integrity that, for me, Lee's entirely lacks.

For one thing, the problem with Lee is that his over-rich style gets in the way. Writers whose every sentence has to be special begin to annoy us after a while, drawing attention as they do to their stylistic colourings, so that their descriptions are coated with this exotic patina. The most effective writers are those whose style we hardly notice because we're so absorbed in the world they have opened up for us.

It could be said against this that, not only is Borrow not a good stylist, but at times he is distinctly bad, and most often when he's writing deliberately for effect. You can spot the bad purple patches a mile off, and somehow they appear charmingly naïve. I would guess he inserted these passages to give his early Victorian audience what he thought they wanted:

"The moon had arisen when we mounted our horses to return to the village, and the rays of the beauteous luminary danced merrily on the rushing waters of the Tagus, silvered the plain over which we were passing, and bathed in a flood of brightness the bold sides of the calcareous hills of Villaluengo, the antique ruins of which crowned its brow".

Three Cheers For Portuguese

In passing, and in keeping with the equally antique world of Borrow, you

need to have some idea of what distance a league is, if you want to get an idea of the range of his travelling. And it must be said that at times his prophetic instincts let him down badly. Here he is at Estremoz on the borderland of Portugal and Spain:

"I now first began to observe an alteration in the language spoken; it had become less sibilant, and more guttural; and, when addressing each other, the speakers used the Spanish title of courtesy *usted*, or your worthiness, instead of the Portuguese high-flown *vossem se*, or your lordship. This is the result of constant communication with the natives of Spain, who never condescend to speak Portuguese, even when in Portugal, but persist in the use of their own beautiful language, which, perhaps, at some future period, the Portuguese will generally adopt. This would greatly facilitate the union of the two countries, hitherto kept asunder by the natural waywardness of mankind."

Not only did the two countries stay apart, but Borrow might be surprised to learn that Portuguese had the last laugh, being the language most spoken in the southern hemisphere in 2021. Alas, in a similar David and Goliath setting. The Scots language, both in Scotland and the north of Ireland, has been completely swamped by so-called standard English over the past couple of centuries.

The Human Factor

But the fundamental reason why Borrow has written the greatest travel book that I for one have ever read is that he respects and in a sense honours his characters, the rag tag and bobtail, the flotsam and jetsam of the highways and byways of Spain and Portugal. He lets them live for their own sakes and not exclusively for his. His priority isn't to create a work of art. *The Bible In Spain* may be flawed and pock-marked at times, but it's real. We get a sense that we're looking through a real window.

By way of warning the biggest single flaw in *The Bible In Spain* is Borrow's obsession with a wearisome Swiss con-man called Benedict Mol, supposedly a soap maker from Lucerne. Maybe I just took agin Mol, as his name is a constant reminder of W.H. Mol, our seriously scary headmaster in my first years at Ballymena Academy. But it's easy enough to skip the Mol passages.

I've previously commended William Blacker's *Along The Enchanted Way* as an example of the good literary travel

book. But I think the modern travel writer who comes closest to Borrow in spirit is Anthony Daniels (also known as Theodore Dalrymple), in his *From Zanzibar To Timbuktu*, with its series of random meetings, narrated with a Borrowian *sang-froid*. Like Borrow, Daniels is prepared to listen. If we want to understand anything or anybody we have to do a lot of listening.

It also helped that Borrow wasn't in Spain to soak up the atmosphere or for the good of his health, but he was literally on a mission, as an emissary of the Bible Society, so he had something to do, ostensibly at any rate. If he actually included in his reports some of the escapades he was involved in, some of them totally avoidable, the committee members back in London must have scratched their heads a good deal and questioned their own wisdom. Still, he had an aim and object, in the circulation of New Testaments in Spanish and Portuguese, and Gospels in Basque, Catalan and the Gitano or Gypsy language. So the adventures that befall him, seemingly unsolicited, have all the greater air of authenticity.

And the characters tumble over one another, each of them with his or her own atmosphere, very much as in *Pilgrim's Progress*, while Borrow ranges over mountain and heath on a bewildering variety of horses, donkeys and mules. This makes for a random world of happenstance, so it's not easy to approach the book in a thematic way.

Contrabandistas

There's the additional complication that both Spain and Portugal were going through turbulent times. The Portuguese were still recovering from the civil wars that had devastated the country, which had been resolved just a few months before Borrow's arrival, with the defeat and second exile of King Miguel I in 1834, due in part to British intervention. Borrow has little to say about this, compared with his observations on the chaotic situation in Spain. My knowledge of the Iberian peninsula in the post-Napoleonic period is more or less non-existent, which I suspect is the case for most of us in the Anglophone world, but *The Bible In Spain* may inspire me to remedy this.

Over and above the hazards of marauding, out-of-control troops of soldiers, the chief peril for the wayfarer was the *contrabandistas*, maybe on a sliding spectrum with the troops, especially in

the southern parts of the peninsula. The stories of their atrocities, told by Borrow's interlocutors, hover at times over the narrative—which leads us naturally on to the Gypsies, the Gitanos, who are never far from Borrow's thoughts.

The Customs Of Egypt

At that period the Gypsies all over Europe were reduced to fortune telling, in the case of the older women, while their daughters and younger sisters were noted for what would nowadays be described as "*exotic dancing*". The men were engaged as wandering tinkers and blacksmiths, and were horse copers on the side. They exerted a baleful influence over the peasant population by pronouncing curses on cattle, which unsurprisingly sickened, and then were spirited away, killed and eaten; and they were constantly on the edge or over the edge of the law. By Borrow's day this was mostly a matter of petty thieving but there must have been a strong communal folk memory of the reign of terror that the Gypsy gangs had exercised in past generations. Borrow's previous *excursus*, *Zincali*, or *The Gypsies Of Spain* has this passage:

"It was not uncommon for a large band or tribe to encamp in the vicinity of a remote village, scantily peopled, and to remain there until, like a flight of locusts, they had consumed everything which the inhabitants possessed for their support; or until they were scared away by the approach of justice, or by an army of rustics assembled from the surrounding country. Then would ensue the hurried march, the women and children, mounted on lean but spirited asses, would scour along the plains fleeter than the wind; ragged and savage-looking men, wielding the scourge and goad, would scamper by their side, or close behind, whilst perhaps a small party on strong horses, armed with rusty matchlocks or sabres, would bring up the rear, threatening the distant foe, and now and then saluting them with a fierce blast from the Gypsy horn."

He goes on to imagine what would happen to some unsuspecting traveller coming up against this contingent, and it wouldn't be pleasant.

The extreme state of alienation between the *Gitanos* and the *Busne*, almost the equivalent of Gentiles, according to Borrow, can be partly explained by the working assumption on the part of the former that the "*indigenous*" populations were almost like a separate species,

so there could be no compunction about fleeing them. When Borrow repeats the platitude that all men are children of the same God his Gypsy servant responds:

"You lie, brother, they are not of one father or one *Errate*. You speak of robbery, cruelty, and murder. There are too many *Busne*, brother; if there were no *Busne* there would be neither robbery nor murder. The *Calore* [*Gitanos*] neither rob nor murder each other, the *Busne* do; nor are they cruel to their animals, their law forbids them."

The extent to which this hostility was simply a result of centuries of persecution is perhaps disputable. More likely, from their earliest origins the Gypsies looked upon themselves as a separate and superior caste, but the persecutions would have deepened their feelings of enmity. Alongside this, the intensity of their tribal bonds was comparable to that of ancient Scottish Highland clans, but without the same degree of inter-clan conflict. It looks as if they managed their internal turf wars pretty nimbly.

Heartbreak Hotel

Borrow comments from time to time on the striking beauty of the young *Gitanas*, but their hard life on the road in all weathers took a heavy toll on their looks. In *Zincali* he explains how they put their sex appeal to good use:

"What availed it to the honest labourers of the neighbourhood, or the citizens of the town, to make complaints to the *Corregidor* concerning the thefts and frauds committed by the *Gitanos*, when perhaps the sons of that very *Corregidor* frequented the nightly dances at the *Gitaneria*, and were deeply enamoured of some of the dark-eyed singing-girls? [Or] when perhaps a Gypsy sibyl, the mother of those very girls, had free admission to the house of the *Corregidor* at all times and seasons, and speeded the good fortune to his daughters... [Or] when the father of the black-eyed *Gitanillas* was at that moment actually in treaty with the *Corregidor* for supplying him with some splendid, thick-maned, long-tailed steed..."

These girls certainly knew how to tease, but that was where the fun ended, which was made very clear:

"No females in the world can be more licentious in word and gesture, in dance and in song, than the *Gitanas*; but there they stop: and so of old, if their titled visitors presumed to seek for more, an unsheathed dagger or gleaming knife speedily repulsed those who expected that the gem most dear

among the sect of the Roma was within the reach of a *Busno*".

These young women would as soon as thought of having sex with a Martian, if any such had been around. Moreover, pre-marital virginity and spousal fidelity among their own people were part of their cultural DNA; and, in fairness to the men, we have no sense of there being one law for the women and another for the men in sexual matters.

Weird Sisters

The older, fortune-telling Gypsy women are the subject of a remarkable passage in *Zincali*, of which I'll just give a taster:

"Yes, well may you exclaim '*Ave Maria purissima*,' ye dames and maidens of Seville, as she advances towards you; she is not of yourselves, she is not of your blood, she or her fathers have walked to your climate from a distance of three thousand leagues. She has come from the Far East, like the three enchanted kings to Cologne; but, unlike them, she and her race have come with hate and not with love. He comes to flatter, to deceive, and to rob, for she is a lying prophetess, and a she-Thug; she will greet you with blessings that will make your hearts rejoice, but your hearts' blood would freeze, could you hear the curses which to herself she murmurs against you... For all her love—and she can love—is for the Romas; and all her hate—and who can hate like her?—is for the Busnees; for she says that the world would be a fair world if there were no *Busnees*, and if the Romamiks could heat their kettles at the foot of the olive-trees; and therefore she would kill them all if she could and if she dared. She never seeks the houses of the *Busnees* but for the purposes of prey; for the wild animals of the sierra do not more abhor the sight of man than she abhors the countenances of the *Busnees*. She now comes to prey upon you and to scoff at you. Will you believe her words? Fools! Do you think that the being before you has any sympathy for the like of you?"

Possibly Borrow was remembering the sinister Mrs. Hearne who had tried to poison him among the hedges of Shropshire.

All Things To All Men

But this is the only instance recorded by Borrow of Gypsy hostility towards him. Even if only the older or more credulous Gypsies actually believed he was one of theirs, the rest of them still experienced his presence among them as a kind of benediction. And that was

without him having to undergo any initiation rituals such as in *A Man Called Horse*. They felt some kind of spiritual kinship with him.

"*"You speak the language of Egypt, it is true, but your ways and words are neither those of the Cales nor of the Busne"*, says Antonio, but later, in justifying himself for passing off a savage donkey on Borrow, he remarks: *"a savage and vicious beast usually has four excellent legs. You are a Calo, brother, and can manage her"*."

Finding himself at a "low tavern" in Madrid, "*thronged with people, who had all the appearance of ruffians*", Borrow is challenged out of the blue by a *torero* to converse in "*the crabbed Gitano*" with a notorious jailbird who had picked up a smattering of the language in prison and happened to be in the company:

"answered him in a speech of some length, in the dialect of the Estremenian Gypsies.

"I believe it is the crabbed Gitano", muttered Balsiero. *It is either that or English, for I understand not a word of it"*.

"Did I not say to you" cried the bull-fighter, that you know nothing of the crabbed Gitano? But this Inglesito does. I understood all he said. *Vaya! There is none like him for the crabbed Gitano. He is a good ginete, too... only he rides with his stirrup leathers too short*"..."

We come across this same instinctive sympathy in his encounters both with Jews and Moors too, but in a weaker form. The biblical model, which to his credit Borrow never alludes to, is the "*all things to all men*" maxim of the apostle Paul. In its popular sense this figure of speech has become pejorative, whereas the original context was meant to depict something quite praiseworthy: an attempt to set aside your own pride and prejudices if it might help you to get alongside the people you're trying to win over to the faith. Thus, "*to the Jews I became like a Jew*", and so on.

We might even be tempted to go further and see in this a kind of incarnation, in a very minor key, not so much the second person of the Trinity becoming flesh, but more like the day-to-day things we read about in the Gospels, the willingness of Jesus to mix with the publicans and sinners. The King in Exile is a concept almost hard-wired into our imagination, as old as the Old Testament and the Metamorphoses. Closely linked to that is the more everyday idea of the hero slumming it—which is a favourite

novelistic device of John Buchan indeed. Similarly Borrow sometimes ends up sleeping in the manger among the mules, and for his own reasons is constantly drawn to the more disreputable sections of human society. In common with most of the Spaniards, he regards the Spanish nobility with disdain:

"I would sooner talk of the lower class, not only of Madrid but of all Spain. The Spaniard of the lower class... is not a common being; he is an extraordinary man. He has not, it is true, the amiability and generosity of the Russian *mujik*, who will give his only rouble rather than the stranger shall want, nor his placid courage, which renders him insensible to fear, and at the command of his Tsar sends him singing to certain death. There is more hardness and less self-devotion in the disposition of the Spaniard; he possesses, however, a spirit of proud independence, which it is impossible but to admire. He is ignorant, of course, but it is singular that I have invariably found amongst the low and slightly educated classes far more liberality of sentiment than among the upper. It has long been the fashion to talk of the bigotry of the Spaniards, and their mean jealousy of foreigners. This is true to a certain extent; but it chiefly holds good with respect to the upper classes."

Again, we don't get much sense from Borrow that, by choosing a poor and humble lot, the disciple is self-consciously following his Master's footsteps. What we see instead is a psychological need for excitement, maybe to quicken his senses and prevent him falling into a morbid torpor.

Birds Of A Feather

Around Badajoz, just over the border in southern Spain, he makes the acquaintance of Antonio, who is deeply involved in "*the affairs of Egypt*" which he deems it's better for Borrow not to know about. That should have given Borrow a clue but he chooses not to take it up. They make their way through Trujillo in the dead of night, it being a town where Antonio doesn't dare show his face, and fetch up spending the night in the woods with a band of Gitanos already encamped there. It turns out that they're on a mission to spring some others from prison on Trujillo, so they slip away and leave Borrow sleeping. But the next morning it's only Antonio who shows up.

So they take to their heels on their mules, but, as they approach the next town, Jaraicejo, Antonio advises they go through in single file: "*a bad place it is,*

and a bad place it has ever been for the Calo people”.

“I followed slowly behind, and entered the gate of the town; an old, dilapidated place, consisting of little more than one street. Along this street I was advancing, when a man with a dirty foraging cap on his head, and holding a gun in his hand, advanced towards me:

Who are you? From whence to you come?

From Badajoz and Trujillo, why do you ask?

I am one of the national guard, and am placed here to inspect strangers. I am told that a Gypsy fellow just now rode through the town; it is well for him that I had stepped into my house. Do you come in his company?

Do I look like a person likely to keep company with Gypsies?

The national measured me from top to toe, and then looked me full in the face with an expression which seemed to say ‘likely enough’.

On being asked for his passport, “I remembered having read that the best way to win a Spaniard’s heart is to treat him which ceremonious civility”. So, the national is then treated to a display of extravagant bowing, and invitations to inspect the signature of the great Lord Palmerston, and they part like blood brothers:

“Caballero, I thank you for your politeness, and for the information which you have afforded me. I hope you will have a pleasant journey. I confess that I am surprised to see a gentleman of your country travelling alone, and in this manner, through such region as these... be on your guard, Caballero. I am sorry that the Gypsy was permitted to pass; should you meet him and not like his looks, shoot him at once, stab him, or ride him down. He is a well-known thief, contrabandista, and murderer, and has committed more assassinations than he has fingers on his hands.”

So Borrow manages to bluff his way to his rendezvous with Antonio on the other side of town, but he finds that things have gone badly. The would-rescuers of the prisoners have been apprehended and put away.

A couple of nights later he’s dozing beside a huge fire in an Estremaduran village, half-listening to the shepherds’ tales about she-wolves, when a beggar who’s in the company suddenly shouts out, “all are captured!”

“I beg your pardon, Caballero, but I did not hear the commencement of your discourse. Who are those who have been captured?”

“A band of accursed Gitanos, Caballero,” replied the beggar, returning the title of courtesy which I had bestowed upon him. “During more than a fortnight they have infested the roads on the frontier of Castile, and many have been the gentleman travellers like yourself whom they have robbed and murdered.”

This was a case of not only roughing it, but living dangerously. But, in the absence of that, I don’t see how Borrow could have got inside the skin of a whole society in the way he did, and interpreted it for us.

Jewish Mysteries

As a side-issue, there’s Borrow’s contemptuous attitude to the Jews of Lisbon, dismissed as a parcel of low-down hucksters, willing to sell their own grannies and (unlike the Gitanos) with hardly any compunction about fleecing their own people. He forgets to remind us of the prestige the Jewish communities in the Iberian peninsula had enjoyed first under the Moorish rulers, until persecuted and expelled, and likewise in the rising Christian kingdoms, until the vicious end of that honeymoon. I’ve previously discussed this in an article about Howard Sachar’s book, *Farewell Espana*. The Jews had to adapt to their degraded state as best they could.

Some readers may recall the obsession with *limpieza de sangre*, purity of blood, the slogan that inspired the ruling powers I both countries to a persecuting mania, even of, especially of, the *conversos*: those of Jewish lineage who had converted to Catholicism, and some of whom had even attained high office in the Church. Borrow may or may not have been familiar with the relevant literature, but we certainly find an echo of it in his encounter, on the road to Talavera, with a tall and broad-built bushy-haired pedestrian, who immediately deduces he’s from England.

“The man walked on about ten paces... all of a sudden he turned, and, taking the bridle of the *burra* [donkey] in his hand, stopped her... and those huge features and herculean form still occasionally revisit me in my dreams... At last he said, “Are you one of us” ?”

As they settle down in the inn to chew the fat, Borrow just lets the stranger

talk, as they all talk to him, unreservedly. Possibly Louis Theroux or his father Paul might have the same gift. The stranger talks of his wealth:

“In gold and silver, and stones of price; for I have inherited all the hoards of my forefathers. The greater part is buried under ground; indeed I have never examined the tenth of it. I have coins of silver and gold older than the times of Ferdinand the Accursed and Jezebel [i.e. the two who united the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon in 1492, “Jezebel” being Isabella]; I have also large sum employed in usury. We keep ourselves close, however, and pretend to be poor, miserably so; but on certain occasions, at our festivals, when our gates are barred, and our savage dogs let loose in the court, we eat our food off services such as the Queen of Spain herself cannot boast of, and wash our feet in ewers of silver, fashioned and wrought before the Americas were discovered, though our garments are at all times coarse, and our food, for the most part, of the plainest description”...

And so he continues, explaining that he’s an Occasional Conformist, as in the age of Queen Anne in England, and he benefits from a whole web of obligations on the part of the ruling class, so nobody dares accuse him of anything:

“it is by no means safe to meddle with us; for it is a rule of our house never to forgive an injury, and to spare neither trouble nor expense in bringing ruin and destruction upon the heads of our evil doers”.

A sinister wildfowl indeed, as John Buchan might say. But here’s the point:

“...“My grandsire was a particularly holy man; and I have heard my father say, that one night an archbishop came to his house secretly, merely to have the satisfaction of kissing his hand... [the archbishop] was one of us, at least his father was, and he could never forget what he had learned with reverence in his infancy... the *ruah* [possibly the Spirit, or the Wind of God?] was continually upon him... till at last he could bear himself no longer... he then returned to his diocese, where he shortly afterwards died, in much renown for sanctity.

“There are many such as I amongst the priesthood, and not amongst the inferior priesthood either; some of the most learned and famed of them in Spain have been of us, or of our blood at least, and many of them at this day think as I do. There is one particular festival of the year at which four dignified ecclesiastics are sure to visit me;

and then, when all is made close and secure, and the fitting ceremonies have been gone through, they sit down upon the floor and curse”...

On the assumption Borrow didn't fabricate this meeting, or embroider the story, it might be fairly said that the authorities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may have had some solid grounds for suspecting the *bona fides* of some of the *conversos*; which of course, even if true, in no way mitigates their guilt for the horrors that were inflicted.

A Lost Cause

It just so happened that Borrow's five years (off and on) in Spain coincided with the seemingly shapeless uprising waged by Don Carlos (1788-1855), the second son of Charles IV of Spain, from October 1834, shortly after Borrow's arrival, up to 1839, when Carlos was banished. He should really have been Charles V of Spain. His elder brother Ferdinand VII had emerged childless from three successive marriages, but after his fourth, to Maria Christina of Naples, he managed to father two daughters, the Infanta Isabella, and Luisa.

This late progeny should have been of no account, as the *Salic Law*, favouring male heirs, should have ensured Carlos's succession. But in 1830 Queen Christina persuaded Ferdinand to repeal the Salic Law in favour of the more egalitarian Castilian succession law. This arbitrary change was hotly opposed by the Carlist party, and Carlos himself was duly banished. With Ferdinand's death in September 1833, the crisis of legitimacy erupted again, and we have Carlos declaring himself the rightful king. Soon after he had to flee to Portugal, where his brother-in-law, Miguel, was himself fighting a losing battle, along similar lines. Both of them were throwbacks to an older clerical, aristocratic and absolutist political culture which was very much contrary to the *Zeitgeist* in both countries, and drew whatever support it had from the fringes. In Spain this meant the Basque country, and assorted regions in Catalonia, Andalusia, and the north west.

Carlos was then reduced to fleeing to England, aboard the King's ship *Donegal*. While there he was offered an annual pension of £30,000.00 to renounce his claim to the Spanish throne, which, having refused, he made his way back via France and the Basque country, and the rebellion then began in earnest.

The high point of Carlos's campaign was the Royal Expedition of the Summer of 1837, when he marched with his army from Navarre to the outskirts of Madrid. But, like Bonnie Prince Charlie, he lacked the killer instinct and eventually withdrew. His army then largely walked out in sympathy. By 1839 he was finished. He ended up in exile again, in Trieste, where he died, after appointing his son as his successor. The Carlist movement continued to haunt Spain for many years after that, but was never again within a shout of victory.

The dislocation of Spanish society in those years probably owes a lot to Napoleon. Anti-clericalism was a post-Revolutionary French export. Time and again Borrow remarks on the abandoned or virtually abandoned monasteries, as well as Franciscan and other religious houses. Clergy morale was very low, as was the calibre of those who took up the religious vocation.

Dissolution

Borrow is impressed by the “*eager hospitality*” of the Irish Seminary at Salamanca, less so by the English and “Scotch” colleges in Valladolid. The Rector of the latter—

“evidently knew who I was, and on that account was, perhaps, more reserved than he otherwise would have been: not a word passed between us on religious matters, which we seemed to avoid by common consent”.

The College has only six or seven students. He's then taken to the College of the Philippine Missions, outside the city gate, where this exchange takes place:

“This is a noble edifice in which you dwell, Father. I should think it would contain at least two hundred students.

More, my son; it is intended for more hundreds than it now contains single individuals... we at present receive no assistance from the government, and are left to the Lord and ourselves.

How many aspirants for the mission are you at present instructing?

Not one, my son, not one. They are all fled... I was forty years in the Philippines, my son, forty years amongst the Indians. Ah me! How I love those Indians of the Philippines.

Can your reverence discourse in the language of the Philippines?

No, my son. We teach the Indians Castilian... We teach them Castilian, and the adoration of the Virgin. What more need they know?... I know little of the country. I do not like the country.

I love the Indians. The country is not very bad; it is, however, not worth Castile.

Is your reverence a Castilian?

I am an old Castilian, my son”.

The English College is in a more healthy state, adorned with portraits of the English Jesuit martyrs, which are like a red rag to a bull with Borrow, whereas in Portugal he was singing the praises of the Jesuit educational system. The Jesuits are all very well, but let them not come near England.

Mistaken Identities

You would get very little idea of the whole military/political situation from reading Borrow. The Church at an institutional level wielded very little power, but Borrow sees signs of a subterranean allegiance to the Carlist cause by many of the clergy. At other times he seems to make little distinction between the Carlists and the brigands who infest the countryside, but he pays tribute to the Carlist general Flint, who apparently is an Irishman. What you do get is a series of snapshots. One of the most bizarre scrapes Borrow gets into, linked to the disturbances, isn't at all of his making. With great difficulty he has managed to get to Finisterre, anxious to see from the landward side the cliffs where he'd nearly been shipwrecked on his first voyage out. The locals are an uncouth lot with their own dialect which is more like Portuguese.

But he doesn't reckon on being hauled out of his bed in a flea-infested attic and accused of being Carlos the Pretender. Brought before the local magistrate, the Alcade, the conversation goes like this:

““Then you mean to assert you are not Calros Rey?”

“I never heard before of such a king, nor indeed of such a name.”

“Hark to the fellow: he has the audacity to say that he has never heard of Calros the Pretender, who calls himself king.”

“If you mean by Calros, the pretender Don Carlos, all I can reply is, that you can scarcely be serious. You might as well assert that yonder poor fellow, my guide, whom I see you have made prisoner, is his nephew, the infante Don Sebastian”.

“See, you have betrayed yourself; that is the very person we suppose him to be.”

“It is true that they are both hunchbacks. But how can I be like Don Carlos? I have nothing the appearance

of a Spaniard, and am nearly a foot taller than the pretender.”

“That makes no difference; you of course carry many waistcoats about you, by means of which you disguise yourself, and appear tall or low according to your pleasure”...

“This last was so conclusive an argument that I had of course nothing to reply to it”, observes Borrow tartly.

We then have a Greek chorus of the crowd chanting, *“Yes, it is Calros; it is Calros!”*

If we’re to believe Borrow, he was actually in some danger of being shot out of hand, until rescued by a gruff fisherman type, who was apparently beside Nelson when he died at Trafalgar.

False recognition can be embarrassing, if not always dangerous. I’ve been the perpetrator of it, and, sometimes, the victim. Once, back in the late 1980s, in Ballycastle, County Mayo, I

was mistaken for, of all people, Alan Dukes. And in the Summer of 2009 I was standing at a bus station in Athens when a young woman came up to me, very excited, and apologised for bothering me, but she believed I was a famous Turkish novelist, of which notion I had to disabuse her. I’ve since worked out she must have mistaken me for Orhan Pamuk. I’ve studied photographs of him since, and can’t see any resemblance; although I allow that possibly I’m on an Identikit spectrum between Dukes and Pamuk, both of whom sadly are rather older than me.

Epilogue

Anyway, I’d love to go on writing about Borrow. About his spell in a Madrid Prison, where he was able to perfect the prison argot and admire the demeanour of the cut-purses as they strutted about in their snow-white linen, prepared for them by their adoring but deluded lady loves. Or his night as the

guest of an innkeeper who, for all his protestations of neutrality in the present distresses, turned out to be a Carlist fanatic, and a danger to anybody he suspected of being anything else.

The last word perhaps should belong to the Captain of the steamer passing between San Lucar and Cadiz. Borrow is supposed to be sleeping on deck, but isn’t:

“That fellow who is lying on the deck can speak Christian [i.e. Spanish] when it suits him, but he speaks others, which are by no means Christian: he can talk English, and I myself have heard him chatter in Gitano with the Gypsies of Triana; he is now going amongst the Moors, and when he arrives in their country you will hear him converse as fluently in their gibberish as in Christiano, nay, better, for he is no Christian himself. He has been several times aboard my vessel already, but I do not like him, as I consider that he carries something about with him which is not good.”

Brendan Clifford

Charles Townshend on Ireland and Iraq!

This is the centenary anniversary of the event that caused the recent War between the Six County Catholic community and the British State—the setting-up of the Northern Ireland thing: the thing that Charles Haughey called an “entity”. No book about this event has been published.

RTE got the retired British War Minister, Michael Portillo, to say something about it. He did say something. Miriam O’Callaghan appreciated what he said. But, even as I heard it, I was forgetting it. It was designed not to remain in the mind.

The last centenary event on which I heard Portillo had to do with the Great War. It was on the BBC Radio in 2014. He deplored the fact that the Germans—having been obliged, after they were defeated, to make a confession of guilt for having caused the War in order to get a Treaty ending the War half a year after the Armistice—brooded over what they regarded as a false confession that was extorted from them. He did not go into

the method by which the confessions was forced—the intensification of the food blockade, which was causing actual starvation in Germany. The Germans, instead of brooding on the unfairness of it all, should have taken their beating and subsequent torment like good little Public School boys and absorbed it as an experience in character development.

In place of an anniversary history of the setting up of the Northern Ireland entity, what has been published is a book called *The Partition: Ireland Divided, 1885-1925*. The subliminal message is that the dividing of Ireland was the cause of Northern Ireland.

If Ireland had been a State when it divided, then it would have become two States merely by being divided. But it was not a State when it was divided. It was a region of the United Kingdom State.

What happened in 1921 was not that an Irish State was divided, giving rise to two Irish States, but that a majority of the Irish population of the British State

wanted to leave the British State and establish a State of its own. It declared by voting that this was its purpose and, after a brief War, it was allowed to leave the British State.

The reason the island was divided was that a substantial population wished to remain with the British State and was fiercely determined not to come under an Irish State.

Mere division between those who wanted an Irish State and those who wanted to remain part of the British State would not have produced Northern Ireland.

Mere division would have left the Six Counties, where a majority of the population was British, as a region of the British State in the same way as Scotland and Wales were.

But that is not what happened. The British majority in the Six Counties were not allowed to remain as Scotland and Wales were. The Partition Bill did not just enact Partition.

It was a very slick and tricky operation.

The Fourth Home Rule Bill, enacted in 1921, established, on paper, an all-Ireland Home Rule system in two parts, with the provision that the Six County part could opt out, and remain more or less within the British State if, in the Six County Parliament set up by the Act, a decision to opt out was carried.

The Six Country Parliament opted out as fast as it could. But the opting out could not be instant, and so there was an moment when there was, in British legal fiction, an All-Ireland Something—with no actual existence—which divided itself.

Nationalism And Empire

The author of this book, Charles Townshend, has also had books on the Rising and the Guerrilla War, but his major work—in which he is most at his ease—is about the Imperial conquest of the Middle East in the Great War, and the setting up, in part of it, of a nation-state to which the name 'Iraq' was given.

The nation-state of Iraq was not set up in response to the demand by an Iraqi nationalist movement for a State. There was no Iraqi nation.

The region in which the Iraqi nation-state was constructed was known, when Britain was conquering it in its war of destruction against Turkey, as Mesopotamia. It was a loosely defined area of the Turkish (Ottoman) State. It was made up of many different peoples—or many different religions, which amounted to the same thing.

The different peoples got on with their different ways of life without being morally obliged to interfere with one another in the course of establishing nationalist uniformity. The State did not make nationalist demands on them because it was not itself nationalist. The Turkish core was not itself nationalist and therefore it could let the different peoples be, to live according to their own designs.

Britain declared War on Turkey about four months after declaring War on Germany in 1914. It invaded from India with its Indian Army. At first the conquered territory was administered as an extension of the Indian Empire. An easy victory was expected because it was well-known that Turkey was "*the sick man of Europe*".

Britain is the main source of nationalism in world affairs. The French Revolution may have broadcast the ideology of nationalism but it was Britain that put it into effect. It was a broad Empire with a tight nationalist core. It did not encourage nationalism in India but, when it declared War on Germany, it declared that it was a war of peoples, not a war for Imperial gain. It was a War for the right of peoples to govern themselves—a war for national rights.

This was partly an opportunist use of the German march through Belgium, which it depicted as a German conquest of Belgium and an assault on the principle of national rights, but it was not only that. It had been feeling its way towards the nationality principle ever since its war in Spain against Napoleon, when it was asserted in a war pamphlet by Wordsworth, the sentimental poet.

If its purpose had been to deter a German march through Belgium, which was not then a sovereign State, it could easily have done so, simply by giving an honest answer to the honest question put to it by the Germans: as to whether it regarded a German march through Belgium as a *casus belli*.

But Britain misled the Germans, in practice encouraging them to outflank the French by a march through Belgium, and so giving themselves a slogan that would play well with the British populace, whose active support had been made necessary by the process of democratisation.

Britain in 1900 stood for nationalism at home and Imperialism in the world—its own Imperialism.

It advocated nationalism in Europe, against rival Empires, for its own Imperial purpose, and provided a safe haven for terrorist nationalists from Europe. And, through the gradual process of democratisation, the populace was indoctrinated into this duplicity.

Why did Britain make war on Turkey?

I never thought of that question until I came across Charles James O'Donnell's history of the Great War and decided to reprint it with an Introduction.

Our postman in Slieve Luacra had a Gallipoli medal, because he had been in the War.

But the War was against Germany. And everyone knew why: it was because of Belgium. But Gallipoli was neither Hohenzollern nor Hapsburg. So why was Turkey in the War? There was puzzlement about why such a question should be asked. Was it even a meaningful question? The best answer I got was that, once Britain declared War, there was War: and in War one does as one pleases; and various countries are drawn in for no very strong reason, and no doubt there was some reason why Turkey ended up being invaded by Britain!

So I turned to the newspapers of the time. In the *Irish Independent* I read that, with the addition of Turkey to it,

the War had become a War of universal liberation. That meant, of course, that it was Good, and one should not probe Good things too closely.

From some English paper, probably the *Telegraph*, I gathered that there had been some incident between Turkey and Russia in the Black Sea which obliged Britain to make War on Turkey as Russia was its ally.

But soon it became clear that Britain had intended to make War on Turkey from the start and was only arranging the moment. On the first day of the War on Germany it had confiscated two battleships built for Turkey in British shipyards—which had been paid for and were waiting delivery. It had until this moment been the friend of Turkey, defending it against Russia. But the declaration of War on Germany revealed it to be a friend of Russia, and the confiscation of the battleships indicated that Britain had become an enemy of Turkey.

Then I came across an American account of the War, published in the 1920s, and commissioned, I think, by the Carnegie Institute, which suggested that the key to these events was an "*understanding*" Britain had reached with Russia that Russia could have Constantinople (Istanbul) if it made War on Germany, and Britain itself would have Arabia, enabling it to connect its Indian Empire with Egypt.

Britain had made secret military arrangements with France for war on Germany, but the vast Russian Army, the "*steamroller*", was seen as the force that would crush Germany, and therefore, once Britain committed itself to the War in alliance with France, it was under practical obligation to honour its understanding with Russia.

The alliance with Russia stood in flat contradiction with the propaganda of war for the rights of nations, which energised popular feeling at home once the raising of mass armies of the populace became necessary.

I assume it was this conflict that led to the subversion of the Imperial principle in the conquest of Mesopotamia around 1916. Extension of the British Empire into Mesopotamia from India might have left social arrangements in the Middle East much as they were in the Ottoman Empire, but the introduction of the *nationalist* principle into a region where there was scarcely any nationalism, and the peoples got on very well without it, was what caused the chaos of the modern Middle East.

In 1914 there was in Basra a movement of something akin to nationalism—but it was *Arab* nationalism, not *Iraqi*. It offered to cooperate with the British invasion. Britain refused the offer. It would not have its rights as an Imperial conqueror prejudiced by local entanglements.

However, the “*sick man of Europe*” proved not to be sick at all. It took the British Army four years to conquer Mesopotamia, and it suffered severe defeats on the way.

That is why Britain sought to generate a force of Arab nationalism against the Turks—a nationalism supported by a religious war, a Jihad, pronounced at the source of Islam in Mecca (in modern Saudi Arabia).

All Or Nothing

The *Russian Steamroller* did not flatten Germany any more than Britain disposed of the *Sick Man*, and so there came about a real possibility that it could lose the Great War it had launched. It therefore made promises to all and sundry in the hope of bringing additional force to its aid. It was not concerned that these promises contradicted one another. It was engaged in a War to remake the world after which, whether it won or lost, it could not be held to its promises. It would either be master of the world, or it wouldn't matter what it was. It was a question of all or nothing.

Its propaganda attributed to Germany the position of *World Power or Downfall*—World Power meaning power over the world. The slogan was taken from the title of a book by a retired German General who exerted little influence in Germany. His meaning was that Germany had been drawn into world trade to an extent that made it dependent on it, and that, if it did not acquire the power to protect its trade with the world, Britain would destroy it—which, of course, is what happened.

For Britain the issue in the War was its supremacy. A negotiated settlement which left the pre-War situation substantially intact with minor adjustments would have appeared to it as surrender. It preferred to risk everything and lose, rather than make a settlement with Germany on a power basis.

It won because of American intervention on its side. The Empire was greatly enlarged. Germany was reduced, pillaged and humiliated. For about three years Britain enjoyed the appearance of supremacy in the world greater than any

other state had ever held. It was during those years that Ireland voted itself independent and had its vote over-ruled by British military power.

But it was only a glorious illusion. Britain had damaged itself internally by the visionary recklessness with which it had waged war. It had altered its political structure under pressure of the total mobilisation of the populace which had been necessary to sustain the bid for supremacy. It had tripled the electorate by the Reform of 1918. The ruling class, which had built up the Empire over two centuries by means of limited wars whose gains were consolidated by judicious political action, was no longer in command to determine how peace should be arranged.

A democracy fed on the secular millenarianism of the War Propaganda had arisen. Idealists and upstart war-capitalists ruled the roost. And the party structure, which was the most remarkable British invention, was in dissolution. The Liberal Party, which had launched the War, fell apart under the stress of conducting it, and the Tory Party, which historically was the peace party of the state, had become the Unionist Party through merger with socially-radical Liberals, and it no longer knew its own mind.

The British Empire was supreme in the world. Britain had agreed, in order to humour President Wilson, to the establishment of a League of Nations as a potential World Power, but had ensured that it would only be a façade. The actual World Power would be the Empire.

But the Empire was a house of cards waiting to be touched.

It might have been nationalist Ireland that gave it the fatal touch. But, at a critical juncture, Michael Collins enacted a *coup d'état* against his own Government (acting in conjunction with the British Government), mismanaged it, and left the house of cards intact for another year.

It was left to the Turks to give the fatal touch. As the subordinate State, provided for by the dictated Irish ‘Treaty’ was being installed in 1922, the ‘Treaty’ imposed on the Turks was being torn up by an insurrection. Britain called on the Empire to come and help put the Turks back in the place allocated to them, and preserve the post-War Order of the world. The Empire did not respond, and the British War Coalition was brought down by a back-bench revolt.

The circumstances were that, during the World War, Britain had invaded neutral Greece, and set up a Greek Government which was willing to join the War on Turkey. Then, when the Turks were finally defeated in the War, Britain encouraged the Greek State to extend itself into Turkey to restore a Greek Empire that was said to have existed thousands of years ago. The Greek Army drove deep into Anatolia. A powerful Turkish national resistance arose against it. The Greeks were driven back to the sea, including the inhabitants of the Greek cities that had long existed in Turkey. When the British call to the Empire to come and help fell on deaf ears, the small British presence on the scene withdrew, leaving the Greek invaders to their fate. And the Government backbenchers at Westminster brought the War Coalition down.

The Party-system was restored, but it was only a mimicry of what it had been before the plunge into war in 1914. The Unionist Party began to call itself “*Tory*” and formed a Government under “*the Unknown Prime Minister*”, the Canadian Presbyterian, Bonar Law.

The Liberal Party had been replaced as Opposition by a Labour Party which sprang into existence when the Liberals split in 1916. Liberals flocked to it but could not give it the quality of the Liberal Party, and it did not know how to be effectively Labour. Its first Prime Minister was Ramsay MacDonald, who deserves to be forgotten along with Bonar Law.

Words And Deeds

Britain suddenly found itself with an inexperienced and incompetent Government, and a vast Empire that it could neither govern nor let go of.

De Valera is rumoured to have said, many years later, that Collins had got more with the ‘Treaty’ than he had appreciated at the time. But the working out of the Treaty depended much less on the wording of the document than on the will behind it.

Churchill was the only survivor of the War Coalition in later politics. In 1939 he denied that Ireland had the right, under its Agreement with Britain, to declare neutrality in the War launched by the Crown. Of course he was not in Office then. But in 1945, as victorious Prime Minister in the greatest war ever fought, and supposedly the most moral war ever fought, he repeated that Britain would have been within its rights in taking over Ireland for the War if it had considered it expedient to do so.

The epistemological power of brute force is not often remarked upon, though it is easily observable in the affairs of the world. And law in the Common Law system in the medium of Parliamentary Sovereignty is entirely argumentative. It encourages pleading each way, with truth being decided by the free judgement of the determining power. Truth is arrived at by decision rather than by discovery.

The truth of the Treaty remained to be established by the deciding party to it, the British Government, in the course of time—which means the cause of events.

What might be done under it by the subordinate party depended on what was happening in the deciding party. The main thing that happened to be the deciding party was the retreat from Chanak, the fall of the War Coalition, and the resultant weakening of the Imperial sense of purpose.

When, ten years later, De Valera came to Office with a policy of breaking the Treaty, and he broke it, the Whitehall response was mere bluster.

Eight years later Churchill rose from the grave and re-asserted Imperial right against Ireland under the Treaty in the matter of Imperial warmaking. The circumstances of the time made it inexpedient for him to enforce that right. But, a year after that, he demonstrated how essentially powerless Treaties with Imperial Britain were as pieces of paper by invading Iraq and establishing a puppet Government in it.

Iraq And Iran

Iraq was an independent state invented by Britain. It was given the appropriate pieces of paper. In accordance with its paper rights, it declared neutrality in the second British war on Germany. Britain humoured its declaration of neutrality for a while. But in 1941 it needed to conquer Iran in order to have control of its oil. For this purpose it decided to pass an army through a corner of Iraq—as Germany had in Belgium in 1914. The Iraqi Government did not oppose the transit of the British Army through its territory, but it insisted on monitoring what was happening on its territory.

Churchill denied that Iraq had any right even to observe what Britain was doing on its territory. He brushed Rashid Ali aside and demonised him, and established in his place Nurel Said, who had offered himself to the British twenty years earlier as a possible King in the making of Iraq but was judged to be too political.

Iran was not constructed by Britain and it had never fallen into the possession of Britain. When the first War on Germany was being prepared, Britain and Russia took a third of it each, leaving a third between them as an independent buffer state. Before 1914 maps were published, showing the British third coloured red. It was a step from the Indian Empire on the way to Arabia (where Britain had gained a foothold in the Sheikdom of Kuwait) with a view to having a continuous stretch of Empire from India to Egypt.

Churchill made a statement in Parliament. *“Iran, Iraq: which of these is Mesopotamia and which is Persia: why can’t these people use their proper names: the ones we gave them”*.

It can be judged from this that, if Britain had won its second war on Germany, there would have been a forceful reassertion of the Imperial order of the world, which had been decaying since the fall of the War Coalition.

But Britain did not win. Churchill’s achievement in prolonging the War after the retreat from France only had the effect of spreading the War, so that it became a war fought and won by others, giving rise to a world determined by others.

When Britain was preparing for its war on Iran, the Soviet Union was at peace with Germany, and to the British mind was therefore an ally of Germany. It is said that anti-Soviet, as well as anti-German material was prepared for the invasion force, and that it had to be jettisoned when Germany attacked Russia. In the event, what happened was a joint occupation of Iran by Britain and Russia, as superficial allies of the moment but deadly enemies at base.

Britain waged little wars under cover of its big wars which turned the world upside-down, knowing that, if it won the big wars, it need not answer for its little wars.

Its little victims were expected to relativise themselves: to see themselves in the perspective of the big picture and stop complaining about how they had been treated. The little people often shaped themselves to this expectation. But China didn’t after the little Opium Wars; and Persia insisted on being Iran; and Mesopotamia/Iraq—after three wars waged on it by its Creator—is now left wondering what it is.

The miscellany of peoples in Mesopotamia were conjured into the nation state of Iraq after the rapid conquest of it by the Army of British India did not work out. But its Creator was in two minds about it. He knew as an Empire, when creating it as a nation, that it did not even have the makings of a nation, and that making it behave as a state—even a subordinate one, would be infinitely problematic. But the handling of it as an extension of the Indian Empire had been prejudiced by the Arab Nationalism it had fostered when the Turks were proving to be a hard nut to crack, and it also sat very uneasily with the war propaganda about Democracy and the Rights of Nations with which it was deluging the world.

In the circumstances, it seemed prudent to opt for the creation of a nation state, to be ruled by an oligarchy headed by a constitutional monarchy which would accept British guidance.

How A King Was Elected

The Jihad against the Turks had been preached by the Islamic authority in Mecca or Medina, and it was understood that the job of being King would go to a member of that family. By the end of the War, Mecca and Medina had been taken over by Saudi Arabia, an independent Arab political development, which grew out of its own resources and established the only durable Arab State.

So in 1919 the authority which had launched the Jihad for Britain was at a loose end and Britain decided that a member of it should be King of Iraq. But it didn’t think it could simply appoint an unknown from far away in the Western Desert to be King in Mesopotamia. The King must be chosen by the Iraqi people themselves through an election or referendum.

The rigging of the election proved to be problematical because Said Talib of Basra insisted on contesting the election. He was a pioneer of Arab nationalism and had demonstrated that he was a competent politician. He had offered his help to the British right from the start of the invasion from India. The offer was rejected in the first instance, but was accepted after the line changed from extending the Empire to making a nation. But Britain wanted a figurehead King, and Talib would not have been that.

The way the problem was dealt with was that Gertrude Bell, the famous Arabist who played a prominent part in creating Iraq, invited Talib to have after-

noon tea with her and arranged for him to be kidnapped and secretly whisked out of the country.

That is what I was able to find out after a lot of searching thirty years ago. That is how Iraq was set on the path of national democracy by its British creator. That was the example set by Britain about how things are done.

Charles Townshend, in his 580 page account of the British invasion of Mesopotamia and creation of Iraq, takes no notice of what I had written on the subject, but neither does his account contradict mine.

For him, however, that piece of exotic history is written almost as if it was a family affair. It is written with ease and familiarity. And I take it to be more than a coincidence that the best known General in the invasion force was called *Charles Townshend*. And so, turning to Northern Ireland, it is perhaps not surprising that Townshend writes about it with a degree of Imperial flair.

Northern Ireland is a political entity—he calls it a *state*—constructed by British government on unsound foundations to serve a problem about something else.

Supposing it to be a state, what kind of state is it? Certainly not a nation-state.

Two Nations Nationalism!

In the mid-1970s I took part in a Conference on Northern Ireland in London, that was held under the auspices of whatever the London local government was called at the time. I explained what I thought was the reason for the War that was going strong: that when Westminster partitioned Ireland in 1921, and held Six Counties within the British state, it excluded those Counties from the democratic political arrangements of the state and imposed a local communal system of government on them, under which the very large minority community had no means of redress against what was done to it by the governing majority community.

It had no access to the governing power of the state, even though the sovereign authority of the state, the Westminster Parliament, retained complete power over the Six Counties. The complete political disconnection of the Northern Ireland minority from the democratic life of the state was achieved

by establishing devolved government, combined with the decision of the Labour and Tory Parties not to organise in the Six Counties or contest elections in them.

Under these circumstances, what went on in Northern Ireland was a mere conflict of communities which were not political parties, though they took on a semblance of being political parties. There was therefore no safety valve.

This decision of the Parties which governed the state that the Six Counties should be governed outside the democracy of the state—that they should be governed undemocratically—laid the cause of the War. And I thought the greater responsibility lay with the Labour Party.

The Conference, held under Labour auspices, naturally did not like this explanation.

I was asked what I thought of Ulster Nationalism and its prospects. I said I thought it was a very bad thing and I hoped it would soon burn itself out. It was a kind of fascist movement.

It was obvious that this opinion made no sense to the questioner. And it turned out that we understood two entirely different things by the term, *Ulster Nationalism*. He meant the Irish Nationalist community in the Six Counties, while I meant William Craig's Ulster Nationalist Vanguard movement. When the Tory Government abolished the Northern Ireland Government in 1972, Craig published a pamphlet called *Ulster A Nation*, asserted Six County sovereignty rights against Westminster, and founded a mass movement to give effect to it. It was a nonsensical movement, without foundations, but for a moment it was frightening.

I was reminded of it by a section in Charles Townshend's book. Townshend has dug up a Dutch geographer called *Heslinga*, who—

“produced a remarkable example of ‘human geography’, a kind of geographically informed social history, evaluating the border as a ‘cultural divide’... Heslinga himself noted the... dearth of significant historical studies of Ulster, certainly in comparison with the plethora of nationalist historians of Ireland. One of the earliest, D.A. Chart's *History of Northern Ireland* in 1928, which helped to furnish the new state with a genealogy much more extended than its few years of actual existence, was also an isolated one. It was not until after the 2nd World

War that a sustained movement to study Ulster folk history, inspired by Estyn Evans, a Welsh geographer at Queens University, began to give real depth to the idea of an Ulster identity. Its focus, though not its manner, was political...

“Heslinga became an enthusiast for Evans' project. His thesis deployed geographical analysis to refute the [Free State's] *Handbook's* central contention that Ireland formed a single entity with no natural internal barriers. Heslinga argued... that while the Central Irish Lowlands might appear to be an ideal ‘historical kernel area’, in fact they had served for most of Irish history as a ‘natural dividing zone’ between the north and the south of the island rather than as a unifying force’. His study elaborated an Ulster identity—he called it ‘Ulsterism’—which was to all intents a national one. It was ‘a form of nationalism’ because it had “too many political implications to be considered mere regionalism”. The border was not an arbitrary compromise between transient political forces but a reflection of deep physical and cultural realities. The careful structure of Heslinga's analysis, with plentiful citation of an extensive range of secondary material, gave it an air of scientific assurance, allowing him to add numerous unsupported or unquantifiable asides, such as the remark that ‘quite a number of’ southern Protestants ‘share with their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen the traditional allergy to—if not dislike of—the Ulsterman! Since his analysis was ‘the most effective declaration of the two nations theory’, not everyone found it equally convincing. Indeed it took place in the ongoing dialogue of the deaf. ‘Irish unionists have embraced his thesis [!!!], and Irish nationalists have ignored it’...” (p275-6).

Townshend gives a reference for that last statement in quotation marks: M. Burgess, *Mapping The Narrow Ground: Geography, History and Partition*, Field Day Review 1. I have not come across that book and cannot go in search of it just now but, since the publication date is given as 2005, it can hardly have been an influence on William Craig's Ulster Nationalism thirty years earlier.

Townshend continues:

“Even though Heslinga supplied it with some weight, the two-nations concept remained politically marginal. Its implications were flirted with by the Ulster Vanguard movement, launched by William Craig (a former Home Affairs minister who had banned the October 1968 Civil Rights march) in 1972. Vanguard's manifesto was challengingly entitled ‘*Ulster—A Na-*

tion', but the short-lived movement was never committed to the principle of independence. The two nations idea was also pushed by a maverick nationalist writer, Desmond Fennell, and enjoyed a curious half-life when it was adopted by the Irish (later British and Irish) Communist Organisation. It also figured in an influential analysis by Peter Gibbon who argued that the territorial basis of the identity fostered by Ulster Unionism made it 'a form of nation'.

"This idea was given a searching appraisal in the most persuasive historical study of loyalism yet to appear, David W. Miller's *Queen's Rebels*. Miller argued that 'a new being, the 'Ulsterman', was born in 1892 and supplied with unique characteristics by 'an army of publicists'. Miller carefully examined this relatively modest by nationalist standards celebratory literature, looking for the 'rhapsodies on national heritage and character' characteristic of national movements. He found the Ulster literature oddly reticent on the point of nationality—indeed only one author (Herbert Moore Pim, a renegade Sinn Féiner) directly argued that Ulster was a nation. Even the apparent racism of Ernest Hamilton's frenetic *Soul Of Ulster* is, as Miller notes, quirky: though Hamilton insisted that the settlers 'had not a drop of Irish blood in their veins', he clearly believed that the two 'races' could actually 'merge', were it not for the Catholic Church—in other words, they were not biologically distinct. In effect they were cultures not races" (p276-7).

Townshend should know very well that earlier waves of settlers had merged with the natives, Catholics though they were, and became Irish, and that militant Protestants were deliberately chosen for the 17th century settlements because of the high priority they gave to religious purity. The State Church inhibiting the merger of settlers and natives was Protestant, not Catholic.)

To the extent that the idea, that political division within Northern Ireland was a national division, was in circulation in Northern Ireland and Dublin in the crucial period of 1969-70, it was in a form written by me. In that form it circulated in thousands.

My source was not academic. Academia had produced next to nothing on Northern Ireland by 1969. I simply described what I saw by direct observation around 1965-6. It was obvious that there were two populations and that they felt alien to one another.

Insofar as there was any political/academic influence, it was that of Desmond Greaves. I had seen him cross-questioned by Pat Murphy at a lecture he gave at Marx House around 1966, and I sensed in his writings a desperate effort to ward off, with complex theorising, the conclusion that what he was describing was a fundamental antagonism of two peoples. I delayed writing about it in those terms until I saw what the Civil Rights agitation led to in August 1969.

(It should also mention that Anthony Barnett of the highly successful advanced Marxist commercial enterprise, *New Left Review*. Barnett, in order to draw me into the agitation, I imagine, explained to me, before the August events, that the agitation was not as superficial and futile as it might appear to me—I being a revolutionary and all that. The Civil Rights demands were nothing in themselves. If they were conceded, nothing much would change. But, because of what the Northern Ireland system was, it could not concede these mild reforms. And its unreasonable refusal of them would cause a build-up of pressure which could result in a revolutionary explosion. And, with the way things were in the world, a revolutionary explosion in Ulster might possibly set off a chain reaction.

The possibility of a chain-reaction in England struck me as a fantasy of academic Marxism—which seemed to have become a very important part of University life. In days gone by, University Marxism—Catheder Marxism—Marxism of the lecture hall—had been timidly evasive of reality, but in England in the late sixties it was where the revolution was at!

I could see that the Unionist Party might be driven crazy by agitation over a couple of mild reforms conducted in a certain way, but I did not see what that could lead to except an intensification of the conflict of Protestants and Catholics. So I stood back from the agitation until the August 1969 events. I then published the Two Nations view immediately, and appealed to the Dublin Government to adopt it as ground on which it could establish contact with the Unionist community. And Barnett published *Explosion In Ulster*.)

Is it possible that what I published could be understood as saying that Ulster was a nation? I suppose it must be—otherwise it would have to be said that Townshend has indulged in malevolent misrepresentation. And, anyhow, I came

to the conclusion that no statement of fact can be so clear that a thoroughly educated mind, bred on theoretical abstractions, cannot make nonsense of it.

When the notion of Ulster being a nation made its first appearance in public life, I published a pamphlet against it called *Against Ulster Nationalism*.

I recall that, when Martin Mansergh decided to give the *coup de grace* to the Two Nations theory, he had some difficulty in understanding that I had not said that Ulster was a nation, nor that the Nationalists in Northern Ireland were a separate nation.

What I said that the population of Northern Ireland consisted of a substantial bit of the Irish nation that was cut off politically from its state and from the rest of its nation, and a British settlement that had developed a distinct national life of its own within the general medium of the British state.

William Craig's Manifesto

In 1970-71 I debated what Unionist Ulster was with a number of Dublin politicians who held that it was nothing but a contrivance of British party-politics—the obsolete form of Tory/Liberal conflict. Their view was that Tories raised it up in 1886 when the Irish Party made the Liberals the Government. In itself it was only an expression of religious bigotry left over from the feudal era. The Nationalist purpose was to bring about a political breach between the Unionists and their Tory creators and protectors. When that happened, Unionism would collapse.

The view was that Unionism might appear to be national in its resistance to nationalist Ireland but it had no national character in its relationship with Britain. It was a Tory instrument, and when the Tories had no more use for it that would be the end of it.

That theory was put to the test in 1972 when the Tory Government abolished the Stormont system. The immediate effect was that the Unionist Party split into three, with each of the three being more Unionist than the others. That was when William Craig published *Ulster—A Nation*, and founded the Vanguard movement. The Rev. Paisley's movement also took definite shape at that time. But the three Unionist Parties, though rivals, functioned as an effective unity which was known as the *Treble UP*.

Ulster—A Nation bears no traces of Heslinga's idea of a Northern mind

shaped by the physical environment over geological time. It speaks only of “*the Ulster people*”, meaning the British people who were settled in Ulster in the early 17th century and whose action on the land produced the landscape of the 20th century.

That people had been set up in the Six Counties, by the British Government, in 1921, as a separate democracy within the United Kingdom. A majority had consented to the measure then, Craig said, and it still consented, but the British Government—in the hope of conciliating a dissenting Irish minority—had now torn down that democracy in the name of democracy by proroguing Stormont:

“Westminster resorted to the jack-boot, disguise it how they may. Jack-boot government deserves only one response from free men—resistance. It is bogus democracy when all the powers of the Governor of Northern Ireland... are concentrated in the hands of one man... the Secretary of State, Mr. Whitelaw. Ulster is now in bondage”.

He continued: that democracy set up by the 1920 Act was pulled down in the midst of a war:

“The British profess to believe that the army is in Ulster to keep the peace between the two communities, pretending that they have no quarrel with either. The truth is that the British presence and the British Army are the ultimate object of attack. It is a strange war in which one side refuses to recognise that it is a party to the struggle, clinging to the pretence of a limited peace-keeping role. It is a strange war in which the other side, the I.R.A., pursues the objective of an Irish government that conveniently disowns their methods only, while allowing them a free rein in its territory... It is a strange war in which the IRA is a lawful organisation with full political rights in one part of the UK but not in the other and is allowed to canvass support and collect funds in one part in order to levy war on the other. It is a strange war in which the UK government accomplishes the overthrow of a democratically elected government and parliament as an inducement to the IRA or its supporters to desist from successful violence...”

“Westminster’s heroic defence of Ulster by shouldering the whole responsibility for internal security and dismantling Ulster’s capacity for resistance to friend or foe has inspired no confidence in their honesty of purpose or their resolve to do other than to betray the truth they undertook to discharge. Out of Ulster’s blood and tears

they have unwittingly forged a nation that cannot entrust to them its security or national destiny... To have robbed Ulster of her own means of protection and then to have failed in the moral duty to supply it themselves... was a crime against the Ulster people.”

“Vanguard’s purpose is to mobilise all those moral forces of our breed, which have hardened over generations of struggle. A nation whose troops do not know for what they are fighting in Ulster are no moral match for an Ulster that does know that it is fighting for its survival...”

“Vanguard’s objective is to re-negotiate Ulster’s relationship with Westminster. Vanguard has no wish to take Ulster out of the UK and it is within the UK that Vanguard will strive for an accommodation that is consistent with the safety and the dignity of an old and historic community, claiming two elementary rights—the right to survive and the right to be free.”

The project of re-negotiating the relationship with Westminster, which is broached here, had a pre-history of which Townshend makes no mention. A number of Unionist lawyers had discussed that relationship in the 1950s and they had come to the conclusion that, under the rule of precedent, Northern Ireland had established a federal relationship with Westminster. The Act of 1920 said that Westminster retained full sovereign powers and might do as it pleased in the governing of Northern Ireland, but, because it had not legislated directly for the region and had never over-ruled Stormont legislation, Northern Ireland had acquired certain inalienable rights of its own by precedent. (This lawyers’ movement was described by Angela Clifford in *Legal Systems, North And South*.)

It is not always easy to tell what “*the rule of law*” is in a ‘state’ governed under the arbitrary power of an elected Parliament by parties which have no legal standing, and there is no legal power beyond the will of a Parliamentary majority of the moment, and laws can be made, and unmade, at will on the spur of the moment.

Westminster might have chosen to find that its Northern Ireland instrument had gained certain powers by precedent. In 1972 it chose to decide that the Stormont system had no powers of its own at all. And Craig’s description of what Whitehall did in 1972 is fair enough, except that the Jack-boots were imaginary.

Brian Faulkner, the Unionist leader who was most in earnest about reform, drew the line at returning all security power to Whitehall. He refused to conduct the Northern Ireland system as an empty shell. Whitehall responded by abolishing it and appointing a Secretary of State to run the Six Counties. And one of the Secretary of State’s first initiatives was to hold a discussion with the IRA.

Craig’s purpose seemed to be to try to forge a mass nationalist movement of “*the Ulster people*”—meaning not the general population of the North unified by geography, but people of the Protestant settlement—and compel Whitehall to negotiate terms with them.

The formation of that Ulster Nationalist movement was undermined by the Orange Order, which remained part of what was then called the *Official Unionist Party*. Craig warned that Whitehall’s object in abolishing the Stormont system was to merge Ulster into the British political system: it was “*Direct Rule and Full Integration*”.

The Rev. Martyn Smyth, head of the Orange Order, and James Molyneux, of the Official Unionist Party, pointed out that the Ulster Unionists had never asked for a little Government of their own, and had only agreed to operate it when it was thrust upon them by Whitehall. (They had participated in the “*integrated*” party politics of the state, as Tories and Liberals, until the first Home Rule Bill was introduced. At that point, the branches of the Tory and Liberal Parties in Ulster had joined forces against Home Rule. Then in 1921 they were allowed to opt out of the Fourth Home Rule Bill, on the condition that they would operate a Six County devolved Government, but they were not allowed to re-engage with the Tory and Liberal Parties, or participate in the Labour Party.)

A State With No Authority

Townshend refers to Northern Ireland as a “*state*”, but does not explain how a state can be entirely without authority of its own and entirely under the authority of another state. And he does not explain what sense it made to impose this ‘state’, without any powers, in a region that was occupied by two peoples which were at war with each other at the time (within the context of the Anglo-Irish War which followed the 1918 Election).

His first indexed reference to “*Northern Ireland*” runs as follows:

“The partition—the drawing of a political border within Ireland—happened because the Irish home rule project, the British government’s acceptance of the Irish nationalist claim that Ireland should not be ruled from London, was resisted by those who refused to accept that claim” (pxxi).

Northern Ireland is not mentioned. It is a kind of conjuror’s trick. Partition happened because Home Rule was resisted in Ulster, and the reader is expected to understand that Partition—the exclusion of the Six Counties from the Home Rule Act—of itself created the Northern Ireland system. But it should take only a moment’s thought to see that mere exclusion from the Home Rule Act would simply have left the Six Counties within the political life of the British state.

Desmond Fennell

As to the “*maverick nationalist writer, Desmond Fennell*”: he did suggest, in his *Sunday Press* column around 1970, a kind of Two Nations view of the North. It was a soft view. He had some argument about it with Jack Lane. He tended towards the sentimental republican view that, although there were sharp differences on the surface, there was a degree of underlying unity which would be effective in the long run.

This was a matter of practical judgment, and it was a matter of some importance in 1970. There are no rules for judgment. Kant, after writing all his transcendental *Critiques*, had the good sense to describe *judgement* in the actual world as a practical art. He compared it to rope-walking. The rope-walker, to stay on the rope, must know somehow where and how to put his foot down for the next step. And, if he does it, there is no knowing how he knew how to do it.

Fact And Policy

There was in the early seventies in Belfast a magazine devoted entirely to the two nations. It was called *The Two Nations*. It was written by Paul Bew—who later made his way, via the Official IRA, to the House of Lords—and by Professor Henry Patterson. Professor the Lord Bew gravitated towards Athol Street (the B&ICO) in 1970-71. I gather that he later claimed to have been a member, but he wasn’t. People of all sorts hung around Athol Street in those years. It was only there that the developments that were actually happening could be discussed with any sense of reality.

Lord Bew never asked to become a

member, and the B&ICO in Belfast never recruited for members. Its membership included people of many different complexions, including Tories. The issue on which it focussed was the problem of ‘Northern Ireland’ which was generating war. *Stalinism*” and “*Thatcherism*” were not to the point. Lord Bew, however, was a very rigorous Marxist-Leninist of the most strenuous Althusserian kind.

He wanted to produce a periodical about the two nations. The B&ICO printed it, but he and Professor Patterson edited it. But saying that there are two nations is fact not policy. And, once the fact has been stated, and denials that it is a fact have been dealt with, what more is to be said. The next thing is to formulate a policy on the basis of the fact. This was being done by BICO. Lord Bew kept his distance from it.

But he apparently felt that re-asserting the fact that there were two nations was not enough to keep his magazine going. He said that the fact needed to be “*nuanced*”. I said that the magazine was his to do what he pleased with, and I would be interested to see the nuancing. But then it turned out that he wanted me to do the nuancing. I could see no ground for subtlety. What existed was a stark antagonism between two peoples, and pretending that this was not the case would not alter the fact.

The Two Nations ran out of steam. Bew joined the woeful Official IRA and concentrated on an academic career, distancing himself noticeably from Athol St. in the process, and becoming a Lord. About twenty years after *The Two Nations* episode I heard him interviewed on Radio Eireann. He said he had expected things to develop towards “*a moment of reconciliation*”.

How could a mind which had tried to persuade me to overcome my empiricist deviation, and become a strict Althusserian Marxist-Leninist, have entertained such an expectation? I had never been a Marxist in philosophy. It didn’t seem to me that there was a Marxist philosophy, strictly speaking. I might be described as a Kantian (of the *Practical Reason* phase) or a Burkean, making ample allowance for irrationality in human affairs, but even so the notion of the conflict of the two well-organised communities in Northern Ireland ending transcendently in “*a moment of reconciliation*” struck me as absurd. Reconciliation comes after a falling-out within a family or a close community. There had been no falling-out in Ulster.

The two sides to the conflict had different origins and histories and both sides were well aware of it.

BICO Policy

The first policy adopted by BICO on the basis of the Two Nations fact was directed to Dublin. In September 1969 it urged the Dail Government to acknowledge the existence of a distinct national entity in the North as a precondition of establishing communication with it, and possibly influencing it. The Taoiseach said there would be no recognition of the Ulster Protestants as a distinct nation, and no retreat from the view that Partition was the cause of the trouble and that there could be no durable peace until it ended. Nevertheless a picket on the Department of External Affairs was arranged—comprising both Northerners and Southerners—in the hope of influencing public opinion. But it was hopeless.

BICO attention was then switched to the British State, which supplied all the essential State services to the North though excluding it from its politics. The demand was that the parties which governed the state should include Northern Ireland in their sphere of operations and thus establish a possible meeting ground in politics for Catholics and Protestants. (The 1970 British Election was followed avidly in the North by would-be Tories and Socialists, even though they knew they could not vote for either.)

So it could be said with a degree of plausibility that the BICO position was Nationalist in 1970 but changed to Unionist a couple of years later. But I happened to notice recently a statement by journalist Susan McKay that the campaign to persuade the Tory and Labour Parties, which actually governed the North, to organise in it and contest elections in it, “*had its roots in the British and Irish Communist Organisation, then in a unionist phase, later to turn nationalist*” (*Northern Protestants: An Unsettled People*, p50).

Was it Unionist to try to persuade the Irish State to do what was necessary to establishing communication with the majority in the North with a view to influencing it? And was it Nationalist to try to persuade the British State to extend its democratic political system to the Six County region of itself. Her statement strikes me as mere gibberish.

“*Northern Ireland is, and always has been, governed undemocratically By Britain*”. Is that a Unionist or a Nationalist statement?

Or is it a false statement? Has the North *not* been governed by Britain?

Or has it been governed within British democracy?

Following the conduct of the SDLP, the Dublin Government and the British Labour Government in the Sunningdale crisis, the B&ICO decided that reform in Northern Ireland through the operation of internal forces was off the agenda, and concentrated on the responsibility of the State to democratise its presence in the Six County region.

This was denounced by the Cork Professor of Social Science at the Queen's College in Belfast, Cornelius O'Leary, in a letter directed against David Morrison, as "*extreme Unionism*", even though it was not a policy supported by any Unionist body.

Dizzy Imperialism

Townshend explains somewhere that the title of his big book, *When God Made Hell*, comes from an Arab proverb, but the God who made a hell of the Middle East was not Allah. It was the reformed God of Christianity who had come to power in the Liberal Party. The Tories wanted a limited war—a balance-of-power war which would advance the cause of the Empire without turning the world upside-down. The Liberal back-benchers, saturated with Biblicalist Christianity, could not contemplate such a thing. To fight a limited war would be to admit that war would continue to be carried on in the world. The heart of the Liberal Party would only contemplate a war to save the world and inaugurate perpetual peace. And they were in high moral dudgeon just then because their internal conflict with the Tories over Home Rule was approaching its climax—a climax which would have the form of civil war.

Civil War was averted by World War, giving moralism even greater scope for expression. And the Irish Party, which was keeping the Liberal Party in government, encouraged the Liberals in their millenarianism—unnatural though such a thing is to Roman Catholicism.

I described the reason given for extending the War from Germany to Turkey as being "*an obscure incident in the Black Sea*". Townshend does no better:

"At the end of October [1914] shots were exchanged between Ottoman and Russian ships in the Black Sea—a staged 'provocation' signalling that

Turkey intended to enter the war" (p5).

This is very short in detail for an incident which had—a continues to have—such far-reaching consequences. And the statement is entirely unreferenced.

Turkey declared neutrality and adhered to it as far as I know, even though it became clear that the Anglo-Russian alliance was based on agreement that the Ottoman state would be destroyed and shared out between them, while Germany saw it as being necessary to give orderly expression to Islam as an element of the life of the world.

Townshend concedes that a great change came over Britain in the course of the war:

"Before the outbreak of the war in 1914 Britain had been one of the most cautious of imperial powers. Given the vast global scale of its empire... this may seem surprising. But though British power stretched far and wide, it was exerted at comparatively trivial financial cost.

"At the end of the war, though, something strange happened. Suddenly abandoning its traditional caution, Britain grasped at an imperial expansion on a dizzying scale" (xxix).

Townsend leaves it at that. He does not suggest a cause of the megalomania of 1914-22, or note that the Turks brought it down to earth in 1922, leaving a sobered-up second-rate elite with an expanded Empire that it did not know how to cope with.

The mess called Northern Ireland was the work of the same statesmen who made a mess of the Middle East, but Townshend does not draw any comparison between the two. He remarks somewhere that the purpose with regard to Iraq was to establish an Arab façade on British rule, but he describes Northern Ireland—a façade if ever there was one—as a state.

Each served a purpose for their creator, but the purpose was not the provision of good government in either case.

Dermot Ferriter, *Irish Times* columnist and UCD Professor, reviewed Townshend's *Partition* book in the *Irish Times* (May 15) without mentioning Northern Ireland, except for a use of the words in the short final sentence. That is a fair reflection of the book, which takes Partition and the formation of a Six County 'state' as being the same thing.

Ferriter comments:

"As they pursued their 'Irish-Ireland' movement, nationalists could not accept that the logical implication of their crusade was partition".

But it was not the "*logical*" implication: it was the *practical* implication. Redmond acted logically enough, within his Parliamentarist understanding, in assuming that, when Parliament carried through a Bill providing for the establishment of all-Ireland Home Rule, the executive power of the State would see to it that all-Ireland Home Rule was put in place.

William O'Brien

William O'Brien was the only Home Rule leader who had carried through a major reform by means of conflict with, followed by collaboration with, a British Government. He had a practical, rather than an ideological or ceremonial understanding of the British Constitution. Relying on the *practice* underlying the *form* of things, he opposed the 3rd Home Rule Bill on the ground that it would not be implemented because Redmond had made the fatal mistake of uniting the Home Rule Party with the Liberal Party so that the Liberals would carry a controversial measure in British domestic politics against the Unionist/Tory Party. O'Brien understood that the system of Parties in conflict was the ultimate reality of the British Constitution, and that the outsider Irish Party would make an enemy of one of the British Parties if it aligned itself closely with the others.

He said that Redmond's approach was driving the situation towards Partition, that Partition was the thing to be avoided, and that there should be a retreat, and the adoption of a reduced measure of devolved government for which there might be cross-party support in Britain.

O'Brien also understood what Protestant Ulster was and how it differed from the Ascendancy Protestantism of the South. He had co-operated with Orange tenant farmers in the Land agitation. When the Ulster Volunteer Force was formed he understood that it was in earnest, and he saw it as the practical response to the abolition of the Lords' Veto by the Liberal/Redmondite alliance.

O'Brien's criticism of Redmond's approach was put to the electorate in the General Elections of 1910 and Redmond's party lost ten per cent of its seats. Townshend does not mention this, nor

does Ferriter in his book.

Townshend has two references to O'Brien. One is about an earlier period. Here is the other:

"The logical implication of the Irish-Ireland movement was partition—the exclusion of those who did not identify as Irish. Raw Irish nationalists (then or even later) could not accept this logic, however. One of those few was Arthur Clery, a Catholic believer in what he called 'the sect of the Gael'... Clery argued that partition was the only way of dealing with Protestants without 'abandoning your principles'. He reacted against William O'Brien's attempt to move nationalists into agreement—'unity by consent'—arguing that 'the attitude of Ireland [sic] towards the Ulsterman is not a little like that of the English towards ourselves'. Both endeavoured 'to gloss over the existence of the horrid thing'. In reality, he held, 'the chances of our absorbing Ulster under Home Rule' were about the same as those of 'England absorbing us if we do not get it'. It could only be done, if at all, by methods which 'just men will prefer not to see'..." (p49)

In what sense was even Redmondism "*exclusive*" of Protestants? What Redmond did was refuse to exclude them when they demanded exclusion. He held that they were part of the nation, when they insisted that they were not. The use of words, as Townshend uses them here, short-circuits thought and creates a blur in its place.

Perhaps he also suggested that the island was national territory and should not be divided, even though a substantial minority of the population did not participate in the national sentiment of the majority. I don't know that he did suggest it, but I know that that was the effective meaning of what many people I debated the matter with forty years ago said.

The idea of a territory which is national, regardless of the opinions of the population in it, might appear to be logically absurd, but it is the idea on which the *Balfour Declaration* of 1917 was based, and on which the State of Israel continues to expand itself.

It is a very long time since I read Arthur Clery. I do not recall that he ever said a word in favour of Northern Ireland. He did not, as Townshend does, see Partition and Northern Ireland as being two ways of saying the same thing.

It would have been more to the point if Townshend had mentioned the Vice-President of Sinn Féin, Fr. O'Flanagan, who, in the fray of actual politics said that the Ulster Protestant community was not part of the Irish national development.

And what exactly was "*William O'Brien's attempt to move nationalists into agreement—'unity by consent'*"? There is no reference note.

O'Brien's position was that legislative Home Rule, which was Redmond's reward for enabling the Liberals to carry a British Budget and overrule the House of Lords, might be enacted but could not be implemented, and in its failure it would push the situation towards formal Partition.

In the interests of averting Partition he had, about eight years before the Bill was published, advocated the establishment of an all-Ireland local government that would be partly elected but would have no national legislative function. His purpose was to get an all-Ireland institution established in which Catholics and Ulster Protestants would do business together. Such an institution might evolve in the course of time and take on a legislative function, or it might have the effect of settling Ireland down within the UK and undermining the Home Rule movement.

When the Liberals considered bringing in a Union Bill in accordance with O'Brien's proposal, Redmond opposed it and said he would accept nothing but legislative Home Rule. The Union Bill was killed at birth. Redmond got his Legislative Home Rule Bill. Parliament passed it, but it could not be implemented without military action in Ulster, and the Army said it would not undertake such action. That crisis in British politics was relieved when the opportunity came along to make war on Germany.

There was a second strand to O'Brien's opposition to Redmondism in the 1910 Elections. Under Redmond's leadership, a Catholic secret society had been woven into the structure of the Home Rule Party. The Anti-Redmond manifesto, drafted by Canon Sheehan, asserted that Redmond had made the Home Rule Party into an instrument for replacing the Protestant Ascendancy with a Catholic Ascendancy.

The Protestant Ascendancy, established on the foundations of the Williamite conquest of 1690, was a system of sectarian minority rule. Church of England Protestants were established in exclusive legal possession of the land, the law, political office, electoral rights, and in legal or *de facto* possession of many professional activities.

That system was undermined by a series of reforms in the course of the century, beginning with the Act of Union of 1800, and including the admission of Catholics to Parliament in 1829 and the abolition of the Church of England as the State church in Ireland in 1871. The final reform was the 1903 *Land Act*, achieved by O'Brien's judicious mixture of disruptive agitation and conciliation.

The weaving of the Ancient Order of Hibernians into the structure of the Home Rule Party began as Ascendancy landlordism fell. It was fairly enough described by Canon Sheehan as a Catholic Ascendancy measure.

It provided Unionist propaganda against Home Rule with useful debating points, at least. And it served no useful purpose, except in Belfast, where it was a counter-organisation in civil life to the Orange Order and the Freemasons.

Catholic opinion would be a major influence in Home Rule Ireland for the simple reason that Catholics, despite the Penal Laws and the 'Famine', constituted three-quarters of the population, and was the majority in 28 of the 32 Counties. It had shown itself competent in eroding the Ascendancy in civil life, once it was admitted to politics in 1829. Its business after 1903 was to exert a hegemonic influence on the dispossessed remnants of Ascendancy. Weaving a Catholic secret society into the structure of the Party at that juncture, when it was bidding to become the governing party in Ireland, and was facing militant Protestant resistance, was political madness.

These were the issues in the contest between Redmondites and O'Brienites in the 1910 Election. It is curious that Townshend does not mention them in a book about Partition, while mentioning D.P. Moran and Arthur Clery. Redmond lost ten per cent of his seats to the O'Brienites on the issue of seeking Home Rule through participation in British party-politics, and the adoption of a Catholic Ascendancy conspiracy, while Moran never contested an election.

The Constitution Of Éire/Ireland

[NOTE: It has often been suggested to me that I should update and re-publish this Constitutional History of Ireland, a book which was published in 1987. It has seemed an impossible undertaking: so much has changed between then and now. The book was written from a Northern standpoint while the War was still in progress.

In the early 19th century the Irish took up Ultra-montane Catholicism as a means of asserting themselves against Imperial Reformationist Protestantism—and this Catholicism was therefore a means of development—a fact overlooked in the analysis. With the disorientating results of Vatican 2, this ideological structure was cast aside. However, instead of this making Irish national life more purposeful, the effect has been to promote ideological incoherence. The State has been left without a rudder.

Nevertheless, the legal analysis has some interest, so it has been determined to publish some extracts from the book in this magazine. In particular, it was argued that the 'Treaty' still determined aspects of the Irish Constitution—and that still holds. (Readers should bear the publication year in mind, when 'the present state of affairs' is referred to.)]

Chapter One Two Constitutions

A comparison of the 1922 and 1937 Constitutions shows them to be fundamentally different kinds of documents. Though they have much in common with regard to detail, they are essentially different in conception.

The 1922 Constitution adopted the British parliamentary forms with a number of slight notional changes: widening the basis of the Cabinet beyond the Dail; limiting the power of the Prime Minister, whom it called a President; introducing the referendum as an additional means of initiating legislation, or of striking down legislation enacted by the Dail. It was a scheme of parliamentary democracy, theoretically modified by referendum. (In fact, no referendum was held during its fifteen years of operation.) It did not set out the rights of the individual in comprehensive form. It adopted the British attitude that individuals have every right unless otherwise stated.

Freedom of religion is stated to be a right of citizens of the Free State. This was done in accordance with the Treaty obligations. The Treaty provided for freedom of conscience, an absence of state favouritism in religious matters, and freedom of religion from state interference, because there were grounds for doubt that religious minorities would get equal treatment with Catholics in the new state.

The 1922 Constitution left the individual to fend for himself in matters of philosophy of life. It followed the British practice of taking for granted the existence of well-established individuality in a diversity of forms. It did not seek to shape the forms of individuality by a guiding philosophy.

The rights of citizenship and liberty of the person are specifically named, but the statement of them does not have the flavour of a Bill of Rights document, or an attempt to lay down any particular way of life. Religious sentiment is conspicuous by its absence.

God gets a passing mention in the Preamble:

"Dail Eireann sitting as a Constituent Assembly in this Provisional Parliament, acknowledging that all lawful authority comes from God to the people and in the confidence that the National life and unity of Ireland shall thus be restored, hereby proclaims the establishment of the Irish Free State..."

He is not mentioned again. The Constitution deals exclusively with arrangements for the exercise of the authority which might have come from God but which is exercised by the people. God is a *deus ex machina*.

The chief difference between de Valera's Constitution and the 1922 Constitution is that de Valera brought God in from the coldness of outer space and allocated him a role within the functioning of the machine.

The 1937 Constitution falls into three parts which are different in kind. Articles 2 & 3 assert sovereignty over the North. Articles 4 to 39 and 46-50 set out the machinery of Government. And Articles 40 to 45 set out the philosophy of life which is to operate as a yeast in the functioning of the state, giving its operations a theological purpose. The latter is what gives the Constitution its distinctive character.

There are also differences in the machinery between the 1922-37 Constitution and the 1937 Constitution, in that the latter

is not parliamentary, properly speaking. In 1937 the Dail ceased to be sovereign. It was subjected to a higher authority, in the shape of the Constitution interpreted by the Courts. De Valera's Constitution is a hybrid of the British and American systems.

It is therefore very odd that between these two Constitutions there should lie a period of very pure parliamentary government under the Free State Constitution as amended by de Valera. From 1932 to 1937 the Free State was more parliamentary than Britain. The Oath was abolished, the Crown was put away, the Office of Governor General was retained in order to be made a mockery of by the person of the Governor General, and the Dail was supreme, unrestricted either by President or Constitution. It signed its own Bills and they became Acts no less effectively than if a King or President had signed them.

Then, having perfected the parliamentary sovereignty of the Dail, de Valera abolished it at a stroke. He got the people to enact a new Constitution enshrining a philosophy of life by which the Dail was legally bound. Ever since, the Dail has legislated under the authority of the Courts.

In the sixty-four years since 1922 there have been three distinct phases of Constitutional formality. Twice, sweeping changes of form have been enacted. And yet, as far as real life is concerned, it is as if there had been no change at all. And the deeper one probes the more one is convinced that there has been no change of consequence since the Treaty, and that the Treaty is alive and well.

"The Law Is An Ass", i.e. A Beast Of Burden

For all the pretensions to absolute clarity made by ideologists of law, law is essentially unclear, and the most ambiguous form of law is a Constitution.

Lawyers operate forms that are apparently general but actually particular. Generalities are given meaning by interpretation, and interpretation is particular. Practice is governed by precedent, and precedents are particular judgements which become part of the habitual framework of practising lawyers.

Judgements are not made by applying pure reason to universal propositions. In the long run they are expressions of public opinion. But they are highly mediated expressions of public opinion, and that is what raises them above mob rule. The practitioners of the art of law operate in a twilight between public passion and universal reason, and their skills are so specific to the courtroom that very few of

them have been able to describe the overall process in which they are involved.

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was one of the very few who could:

“The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience... The law embodies the story of a nation’s development through many centuries, and it cannot be dealt with as if contained only the axioms and corollaries of a book of mathematics. In order to know what it is, we must know what it has been, and what it intends to become. We must alternatively consult history and existing theories of legislation. But the most difficult labor will be to understand the combination of the two into new products at every stage. The substance of the law at any given time pretty nearly corresponds, so far as it goes, with what is then understood to be convenient; but its form and machinery, and the degree to which it is able to work out desired results, depend very much upon its past.

“In Massachusetts to-day, while, on the one hand, there are a great many rules which are quite sufficiently accounted for by their manifest good sense, on the other, there are some which can only be understood by reference to the infancy of procedure among the German tribes, or the social condition of Rome under the Decemvirs” (*The Common Law*, 1881, p1-2).

Law is at once mercenary and ideal, commonplace and transcendental, native and exotic. And in Ireland it is imported. Irish law is colonial. It has no connection with the Brehon law by which Celtic society was ordered for two thousand years. Irish law is the particular variant of Romano-German law that was forged in England. And when a movement was set afoot in the 1940s to displace English law, it was proposed to substitute, not a development of Gaelic law, but Roman law as developed in the Canon Law of the Church. Irish law is, therefore, on the philosophical side, rather at sea.

It is not the business of a competent criminal or civil lawyer to philosophise about his practice. But the Constitutional lawyer in Ireland is a dabbler in philosophy, in the jargon of law. Though the Dail is subject to the Courts, there have been very few Constitutional law cases in fifty years. There is no developing practice of Constitutional law here as there is in America. And in the cases that there have been, the judgements are inconsistent because public opinion has not been consistent.**

The Constitutional history of the State cannot be understood through the history of the Constitutional forms of the State. I will give the history of the forms, but I will also set them in the context which

makes sense of them. The wildly fluctuating Constitutional forms from 1922 to 1937 did not indicate any social indecision about the purpose of the State. The society was so certain of its purpose that the Constitutional forms hardly mattered. The State was no less theocratic under the forms of the 1922 Constitution than it was under the 1937 Constitution. And this purposeful certainty of the society gave a stable evolutionary continuity to State affairs as Constitutions came and went.

Constitutions As Camouflage

When one speaks of the Irish Constitution one refers to something which is different in kind from what is called the British Constitution. The Constitution of Ireland is a book of 214 pages. The Constitution of the Free State was 34 pages. But the British Constitution does not exist in that way at all.

Westminster is a sovereign Parliament. It conducts business in accordance with procedures such as a club might have. It is also surrounded by ceremonies of state. But there is no official document called the Constitution.

The British Constitution is a matter of opinion. Beyond the procedures and ceremonies, it is a historical description of how the State has actually functioned. Anybody is free to write the British Constitution. And no description of it has more official validity than any other.

A pamphlet by Edmund Burke, and books by Walter Bagehot and Erskine May, expressed opinions about what Parliament is. Those opinions had more appeal than other opinions. They caught the imagination of participants in Parliament, and, on the basis of mere opinion, they continue to this day to orientate the behaviour of Parliament.

Books on the British Constitution describe how the State is actually constituted. Books on the Irish Constitution describe how the State says it is constituted.

The most important institution in the actual constitution of the Irish State has been the Catholic hierarchy. During the twenties and thirties it gave purpose and coherence to the State regardless of Constitutional forms, and in 1951 the leaders of Government and Opposition all made solemn statements in the Dail that the Dail ought not even contemplate legislation of which the Bishops disapproved.

A book on the British Constitution which ignored a power like this would meet with universal ridicule. But the only book on Ireland which described how the State was actually constituted and how it actually functioned, Paul Blanshard’s *The*

Irish And Catholic Power, was universally reviled.

There was general consent to the arrangement whereby the Church supervised the State, but along with this went a general insistence that supervision of the State by the Church must not be described.

An Eternal Statement

De Valera’s Constitution was intended to be a definite statement of the purpose to which the people in Ireland who made the revolution were dedicated. It marked off the Irish “*philosophy of life*” from the British philosophy, and it placed the Irish philosophy at the heart of the State where it would guide its further development.

Fifty years is not a long time in the life of a people. In the life of such a conservative and traditional people as the Irish are said to be, it is scarcely the blink of an eye.

The English, a turbulent and discontented people, attached to a hostile fragmenting religion, founded their national state on the basis of their philosophy of life three hundred years ago. Today the same philosophy of life guides the activity of the same state. The England of today is easily recognised in the England of 1688. The detail has filled out. The implicit has been made explicit. The present is a consistent working out of the vision of John Locke and William of Orange.

A mere two generations have passed since the Irish Constitution was drafted by the man who said, truly, that he need only look into his own heart to know what the people wanted, and was enacted by the people themselves as an abiding statement of their mind and will. And what is two generations in the life of the oldest civilisation in Christendom?

De Valera said in his 1935 *St Patrick’s Day Broadcast* to the Irish at home and abroad: “Since the coming of St. Patrick... Ireland has been a Christian and a Catholic nation... She remains a Catholic nation.” And he said in a broadcast recommending the Constitution to the people:

“...There is a stage in the life of every community in which its customs as well as its philosophy of life pass into its laws. A system of law which is divorced from the convictions, the beliefs and spiritual character of a people is in no sense a national code” (*Broadcast*, 15.7.1937).

Nobody disagreed. Whatever be the historical fact of the matter, the people had a formal idea of themselves as being unwaveringly loyal to Roman Catholic traditions of immemorial antiquity.

Measured against the time since St. Patrick, two generations is the flicker of an

eyelid. 1937 is virtually the present day. Surely then, an account of the state of the public mind in which the Constitution was adopted is superfluous? Surely the public mind then and the public mind now are identical on such a general question as the "*philosophy of life*"!

This book demonstrates otherwise. It describes the state of the public mind which adopted the Constitution. It shows a wide-ranging consensus on fundamentals, and a conviction that truths were being re-stated which would prevail for as long again as they have since they were brought here by St. Patrick. It depicts a world which exists no longer.

Constitutions As Disposable Wrappings

The Irish Constitutions have not been the structural nucleus of socio-political development as the American Constitution has been. They have been more in the nature of outer skins which are periodically discarded.

The **American Declaration of Independence** was an earnest, if also eloquent, statement of the essential principles on which the colonies took their stand, and the Constitution forged those principles into an enduring structure of State.

The Irish **Declaration of Independence** is, by comparison, a piece of grand rhetoric produced for a grand occasion: music for a Gotterdammerung. The gods of the Rising were not representative Irishmen soberly stating a well-considered disagreement of principle with the British mode of Government which imposed on the Irish people the burden of withdrawing from the United Kingdom. Their purpose was to engender a powerful separatist sentiment in the people by means of a very dramatic gesture of self-sacrifice.

The world outlooks of Pearse, Connolly, MacDonagh and Tom Clarke were far removed from the general world outlook of nationalist Ireland. Joseph Mary Plunkett was perhaps the only real harbinger of the future amongst them.

An earnest declaration of the difference of social principle with Britain which eroded the Union during the half-century before 1916 and which has governed actual developments since independence will not be found in any Constitutional document. The function of Constitutional documents has been diplomatic rather than constitutive. Constitutions have, therefore, been skins to be shed.

Michael Collins used the simile of a "*stepping stone*" for the Treaty. Though he was not making the point that I am making here, it is an apt simile for the point.

The Treaty, though not formally conceding complete independence, was the first stepping stone on the way to independence. Get firmly on the first stepping stone and you are out of the United Kingdom. You may then move onto the next stepping stone in your own time.

Collins saw the stepping stones from the United Kingdom to complete independence. But the internal dynamic—the unstated principle of development—of nationalist Ireland also had its set of Constitutional stepping stones.

The 1922 Constitution gave ample scope, merely by being liberal, for extensive Catholicising measures in public life. The 1937 Constitution established both prohibitive and directive religious principles in the formal structure of the State. But it was not an orthodox Catholic Constitution, recognising the Catholic Church as the one true Church and establishing it as the Church of the State, and the radical vanguard of the nation had begun to resent that imperfection in the 1950s. It is therefore entirely conceivable that the enhanced Catholicisation of Irish life would have resulted in a second generation revision of the Constitution in the sixties, officially establishing the Roman Church as the Church of the State and formally restricting the freedom of other religions to the private sphere. (These changes would have been merely formal, since both of these things were the case in fact.)

The fifties were the high point of the substantially distinctive Irish way of life shaped around the Catholic Church. That way of life began to fall apart in the sixties, instead of developing on the lines envisaged by the influential judge, George Gavan Duffy. But it did not fall apart because of an Irish rebellion against Rome. It happened the other way about. Rome subverted the further development of the way of life it had fostered in Ireland, and which nationalist Ireland was willing to continue and develop, by the disorientating changes it made at the Second Vatican Council.

In the confusion of the seventies there were a few tentative moves backwards towards the liberal values which had prevailed when Ireland was governed by Britain. The Courts, which had been given authority over the Dail for the purpose of facilitating a thorough Catholicisation, and which had begun in the fifties to replace the British common law with Roman Canon Law as the basis for judgement, used their power in the seventies to introduce a few liberal judgements.

But it could not be said that a liberal development set in at the Constitutional level. The Constitution was left alone,

apart from the deletion of a minor part of Article 44. (That deletion was done with the approval of the Bishops on the grounds that, with the process of Catholicisation having been aborted by Rome, it was just an embarrassment to them)

The Constitution survived the liberal seventies intact. Nobody knew what to do about it. Everyone was waiting to see what would happen, so nothing happened.

The third generation lived in confusion. In the fourth generation, energised by a restorationist Pope, Catholic action has again taken up the banner which it was ordered to lay down twenty years ago. And it has achieved impressive victories in the divorce and abortion referendums. Will Ireland enter the third Christian millennium on the crest of a new wave of social Catholicism?

Or will the year 2001 see the fifth generation finally embarking on Ireland's secular odyssey? I am a historian, not a prophet, so I cannot say. But perhaps the way history is written can affect the future.

There is an intriguing prophetic document produced around 1700 by Robert Fleming, an English Nonconformist, which was reprinted by the Belfast United Irishmen in 1794. Fleming deduced the future from the *Book of Revelation*, and insisted that the Papacy would break up around 2001, and not before. (Wolfe Tone, a soldier in the French Army, recorded what he thought was the fall of the Papacy in his Journal for March 1798. But it came back with redoubled force in 1815. Fleming had predicted the French Revolution of the 1790s and said that the Papacy would survive it, and likewise with the 1848 revolution. He predicted much else that has happened in the history of Europe.)

That is all nonsense of course. Still, seeing how the Irish liberal movement of the seventies is melting away in the eighties, we can only hope that Fleming has happened to get it right yet again. Developments in Ireland have been intimately connected with the fortunes of the Papacy for a very long time—since the time of the Confederation of Kilkenny—and it seems likely that this intimate connection will continue to determine Constitutional matters.

Notes:

* The Articles 2 & 3 of the 1937 Constitution, laying claim to Northern Ireland, have since been amended to reduce the claim to an aspiration for unity.

** Since the 1980s there has been a considerable increase in Constitutional cases, with the Courts nudging the legislature towards more liberal legislation, helping along an evolution towards a socially liberal public opinion. It is still true to say that public opinion is inconsistent!

Solzhenitsyn's Two Centuries Together.
Part 18: *The Pogroms, Part 7*

Odessa in 1905

The second '*aliya*'—'*ascent*' of relatively large numbers to Palestine—started in 1904 in the wake of events in Kishinev and Gomel and continued through the 'revolution' of 1905 and the restoration of Russian government authority in 1906-7. The numbers were relatively large in relation to the normal pattern of emigration to Palestine, but they were pitifully small in relation to emigration to the United States. As mentioned in an earlier article in this series, Jonathan Frankel gives as figures for Jewish emigration to the United States:

1900:	37,011
1904:	77,544
1905:	92,388
1906:	125,234 ¹

The connection to the events surrounding the 1905 Revolution is obvious. Of the emigration to Palestine, Frankel says:

"While close to 1,000,000 Jews left the Russian Empire for the United States alone in the decade before the First World War, a mere 20,000—30,000 settled in Palestine, and that is far from the whole story. No more than a third, or perhaps a quarter, of this number can be classified as youth. The majority were older people driven by traditional religious motives to come to the Holy Land. In many cases indeed the aim was not so much to live in the country as to ensure that one died and was buried there."

He continues:

"However, more remarkable than the low number of those coming was the huge percentage of youth who left during the decade of the Second *Aliya*. On one occasion Ben Gurion asserted that no more than ten percent had remained in the country. A survey made at Jaffa for the year 1912 produced the information that (the Yemenites apart) some 750 prospective immigrants entered the city through that port, while almost exactly the same number had left."

He concludes:

"it follows, however extraordinary the fact may seem, that the more or less permanent force of labour youth—the group considered synonymous in popular parlance with the "Second *Aliya*"—was no more than a few hundred strong."

Yet Frankel still insists that this group was decisively important: "*It is improbable that a Jewish state could have been created without their intrusion into the Yishuv.*" The importance was psychological rather than numerical and had its origins in the experience of the events surrounding the 1905 revolution:

"The hard core within the immigrant youth, perhaps no more than two or three hundred, were charged to an exceptional degree with political energy—an energy drawing its force from the Russian revolutionary experience, on the one hand, and from Jewish messianism, on the other. The revolution had provided them, first, with a heightened belief in themselves, the youth, as the natural source of political leadership. Increasingly, in the period between the Kishinev pogrom and the assembly of the First Duma [April 1903—March 1906—PB], the very young had come to dominate Jewish politics in the Pale of Settlement. Those who had grown up in those tumultuous times took for granted that not only their future but also the present belonged to the youth. Second, they brought with them from this contact with the revolution and with radical thought in Russia generally a sharp cutting critical spirit, a profound urge to negate the existent, to damn every compromise or hypocrisy, every tradition as an obstacle to freedom and every sign of comfort as bourgeois" (all the above quotations from pp.366—7).

In wanting to discuss the Second *Aliya* and its consequences in Palestine I will be rather drifting away from the concerns of Solzhenitsyn. Solzhenitsyn is mainly interested in Zionism as a possible solution to Russia's Jewish problem. He broadly accepts the Zionist thesis that the Jews are a distinct people,

a distinct nation, who could only find fulfilment as a people if they have their own national territory. Solzhenitsyn sees only two peoples—Russians and Jews. There is the complication that 'Russians' also include Ukrainians, Belorussians, Poles and, in the case of Kishinev, Roumanians. But they serve Solzhenitsyn mainly as a means of distancing the Russians proper from the worst excesses of antisemitism in the Pale. He has little enough to say about their own distinct existence, and the consequences of Zionism for the Arab population of Palestine are of no interest to him.

Nonetheless, the emergence of the state of Israel and the Jewish mentality that accompanied it—so very different from the traditional Judaism prior to the nineteenth century—was largely a consequence of the events in the Russian Empire that Solzhenitsyn describes in his book and that I have attempted to follow in this series of articles, a story that climaxes in the brutality of 1905 and the new Jewish self assertiveness that accompanied and provoked it. The great example of this is the pogrom in Odessa that followed Nicholas II's manifesto proclamation on October 17th (O.S.).

Frankel (p135) says, rather sloppily, that 800 Jews were killed in Odessa on October 18th and later (p149) he adds: "*In Odessa alone, the number of dead and wounded was alleged to have reached 6,000.*"

According to the historian Robert Weinberg:

"the police reported that at least 400 Jews and 100 non—Jews were killed and approximately 300 people, mostly Jews, were injured, with some 1,632 Jewish houses, apartments and stores incurring damage".

A contemporary Jewish paper, *Voskhod*, reported that "*over 800 were killed and another several thousand were wounded*". The lawyer Maxim Vinaver, an important member of the Constitutional Democratic Party ('Cadets'), "*wrote in 1907 that over 400 were killed and approximately 2,000 were wounded*".²

In addition, although Odessa was by far the worst, there were throughout

1 Joseph Frankel: *Prophecy and Politics — Socialism, Nationalism and the Russian Jews, 1862—1917*, Cambridge University Press, 1984 (first published 1981), p.135

2 Robert Weinberg: 'Workers, Pogroms, and the 1905 Revolution in Odessa', *The Russian Review*, Jan., 1987, Vol. 46, No. 1, p.53 Robert Weinberg is Professor of History and International Relations in Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania and author of books on the Beilis blood libel trial, the project for a Jewish national territory in Birobidzhan and the events in Odessa in 1905

the Russian Empire, over 600 pogroms between October 1905 and January 1906. According to another account:

"S.A. Stepanov, using data from police investigations, reckoned that during the October pogroms 1,622 people died and 3,544 were injured. Determining nationality was only possible for 75 percent of the murdered and 73 percent of the injured; from this Stepanov concluded that Jews accounted for 711 of the murdered and 1,207 of the injured; Orthodox Christians (Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians) accounted for 428 murdered and 1,246 injured; Armenians 47 of the murdered and 51 of the injured. Shlomo Lambroza, not trusting police sources, used data from opposition materials; only among Jews, he counted 800 deaths in Odessa alone and 3,103 for the entire country during the 1905—1906 pogrom waves. Victims were often random people and not at all revolutionaries. During the horrible Tomsk massacre, when pogromists burned a railroad officers' building and killed all who tried to escape the blaze, 68 people died, of whom only one, according to the police, was linked to the revolutionary movement; most of the rest had not come to attend a revolutionary intelligentsia meeting (as the pogromists thought) but simply to receive salaries."³

According to Podbolotov, while attacks on Jews were concentrated in the Pale of Settlement in Northern and Central Russia the pogroms were directed against "*students and the intelligentsia*". The impetus of the violence, then, was against what were seen as the forces that were behind the 1905 revolution, forces that were seen as having rejoiced in Russia's humiliating defeat at the hands of the Japanese and that had then triumphed with the proclamation of October 17th.

Weinberg (p.61) describes the rejoicing that followed the proclamation:

"The storm broke on October 18. News of the October Manifesto had reached Odessa officials on the previous evening, and by the next morning thousands of people thronged the streets to celebrate. As one university student exclaimed, "A joyous crowd appeared in the streets—people greeted each other as if it were a holiday." Jews were joined by non-Jews in vigorously and enthusiastically celebrating the

granting of civil rights and political liberties.

"At first the crowds were peaceful, but the quiet did not last long. Soon after the demonstrations began, several individuals began to unfurl red flags and banners with anti—government slogans. Others shouted slogans like "Down with the Autocracy", "Long Live Freedom", and "Down with the Police". Apartment dwellers draped red carpets and shawls from their balconies and windows, while groups of demonstrators forced passersby to doff their hats or bow before the flags. In the city дума building, demonstrators ripped down the portrait of the tsar, substituted a red flag for the Imperial colors and collected money for weapons. The city governor also reported that one group of demonstrators tied portraits of the tsar to the tails of dogs and then released them to roam the city. The mood of the demonstrators grew more violent as the day wore on. Mobs of demonstrators — primarily Jewish youths, according to official accounts — viciously attacked and disarmed policemen. By mid—afternoon Neidgart [the Odessa governor — PB] had received reports that two policemen had been killed, ten wounded and 22 disarmed, and that many others had abandoned their posts in order to avoid possible injury."

Already, though, there was some opposition to all this rejoicing (p.62):

"Armed confrontations originated near the Jewish district of Moldavanka in the afternoon and early evening of October 18. The clashes apparently started when a group of Jews carrying red flags in celebration of the October Manifesto attempted to convince a group of Russian workers to doff their caps to the flags. Harsh words were exchanged, a scuffle ensued, and then shots rang out. Both groups scattered, but quickly reassembled in nearby streets and resumed their fighting. The clashes soon turned into a pogrom, as Russians indiscriminately attacked Jews and began to vandalise and loot Jewish homes, apartments and stores. The military on October 18 was equally vigilant in its efforts to restrain both gentle and Jewish rioters, vigorously suppressing the disturbances. Cossacks soon arrived on the scene and restored order by early evening"

It was the following day, October 19th, that "*the pogrom began in full force*". A patriotic rally was organised to show loyalty to the Tsar. It included many workers, including day labourers

working on the docks, the group Weinberg eventually identifies as mainly responsible for the pogrom. The crowd carried icons and portraits of the Tsar and held a brief service in the cathedral:

"Suddenly, shots rang out, and a young boy carrying an icon lay dead. Most accounts of the incident assert that the shots came from surrounding buildings. No one knows for certain who was responsible for the shots, but evidence strongly suggests that they were fired by revolutionaries or members of Jewish and student self—defence brigades. In any case, the crowd panicked and ran through the streets as more shots were fired from rooftops, balconies, and apartment windows. Revolutionaries and self—defence units organised by students and Jews threw homemade bombs at the demonstrators, indicating that they were ready to instigate confrontations. The shootings triggered a chain reaction. Convinced that the Jews were responsible for the shootings, members of the patriotic demonstration began to shout "Beat the Kikes" and "Death to the Kikes", and went on a rampage, attacking Jews and destroying Jewish apartments, homes, and stores."

Weinberg's account of what then happened is horrifying. He says that the most prominent element in the pogroms were the day labourers working in the port and he goes on to describe their conditions of life. In order to get work day by day, they had to put their names on a sub-contractor's list which meant getting up at two or three o'clock in the morning.

If they succeeded in getting work they often had to wait in an inn until 10.30 at night to get their money. A third of their wage went to the sub-contractor. Many of them were living for years on end in terrible conditions in doss-houses. Not only were they in competition with Jews for what work there was but "*the domination of the grain trade by Jewish merchants predisposed many dock workers against the Jews whom they conveniently saw as the source of the troubles, particularly the lack of jobs ...*" The conditions of their lives predisposed them to drunkenness and hopeless rage. In June, in the events surrounding the arrival of the Battleship Potemkin, "*dockworkers and day labourers exploded in a fit of wanton rage but chose to challenge the authorities by destroying the harbour*", not, on that occasion, attacking the Jews.

Weinberg says of the Loyalist demonstration:

3 Sergei Podbolotov: "... and the Entire Mass of Loyal People Leapt up": The attitude of Nicholas II Towards the Pogroms' Cahiers du Monde russe, Jan.—June, 2004, Vol. 45, No. 1/2, p.195. Podbolotov is a Professor in the 'Independent not—for—profit' European University at St Petersburg.

"This demonstration had the earmarks of a rally organised by extreme right—wing political organisations like the Black Hundred, which had emerged earlier in the year."

This suggests that there was an organisation called the Black Hundreds, one among several. '*Black Hundreds*' seems to have been a general term applied to anti-semitic and anti-liberal agitators and to the people who engaged in the pogroms, but the extent to which this was an organised activity—still less an activity organised or promoted by the central government, as widely believed—is very dubious. Hans Rogger, who has been quoted in earlier articles arguing against the idea that the pogroms were willed by the government, says that, prior to 1905:

"traditional conservatism... had tended to shun political action and to consider it either a prerogative of the state or the illegal activity of liberals and socialists. The post—1905 Right was more militant, more demagogic, more intransigent vis—à—vis the state and its officials than conservatives either wished or dared to be. In this period, traditional conservatism was characterised by intellectual poverty and an unwillingness to descend into the political arena. These characteristics stemmed not only from a distaste for politics and a reluctance to see the larger public become involved in it, not alone from the belief that the historic interests of the nation would best be protected by established institutions and their servants, but also from the genuinely conservative inclination not to bestir oneself, to leave things as they were, to let them take their course and hope that in time they would come out all right." ⁴

Owing to the success of the liberal revolution of 1905, crowned by the October Manifesto, however,

"some way had to be found for supporters of the status quo to demonstrate that popular sentiment was not all on the side of the opposition and that the state could count on allies in society if only it would resist the headlong rush to concession and innovation."

But

"The efforts made in this direction before October 1905—the staging or encouraging of pogroms and the organisation of a number of monarchist organisations, mostly of local scope, were not notably successful. They

failed to transform sporadic outbursts of popular passion or dynastic loyalty into sustained or organised political action; they were uncertain of their aims in the face of the government's own uncertainty, and they did not prevent the issuance of the October Manifesto which, with its promise of civil liberties, political rights, and a popularly elected legislative duma, made it all the more necessary that conservatives abandon their self—imposed restraint and bring a broadly based movement into the field against the liberals and radicals who had organised themselves into political parties long before October 1905." ⁵

He is explaining the formation of the 'Union of the Russian People', established on October 22nd 1905 (not, as claimed by Walter Laqueur, March 1906 ⁶—the month, as it happens, of the formation of the first Duma, created as a result of the October Manifesto). The term '*Black Hundred*', according to Podbolotov (p.194), "*came from mediaeval Russia, where it signified the lower class which stayed outside the town walls*". Although violent and mutinous' they

"were conservative by virtue of their illiteracy and supposedly unquestioningly supported the autocracy and "the established traditions". At the beginning of the twentieth century the opponents of the autocracy nicknamed, disdainfully, the monarchists Black Hundreds because of their supposed "backwardness" and "proneness to violence"..."

The populist URP, whose programme included redistribution of land to the peasantry and legally regulated employer/employee relations, ⁷ "*willingly accepted this nickname as they claimed to be representatives of the "Black millions" of simple, silent—majority Russians.*"

5 In fact it was only in October that the Constitutional Democratic Party was formed, though it was preceded in July 1903 by the conspiratorial Union of Liberation which was the main political driving force of the events of 1905. See Shmuel Galai: *The Liberation Movement in Russia, 1900—1905*, Cambridge University Press, 1973.

6 Walter Laqueur: *Black Hundred—the rise of the extreme right in Russia*, New York, HarperPerennial, 1994, p.18.

7 They also seem to have had an understanding of Modern Money Theory. According to Rogger (p.411): 'There were denunciations of the government's financial conservatism; demands for easy credit and a paper ruble not backed by gold—"for the issue of paper notes depends on the will of the Tsar and the needs of the people"'

The appearance of this organised political anti-semitism did not result in an increase in political violence. On the contrary, whatever might have been the ambitions of its founders or its members, it coincided with the decline in political violence that accompanied the tough security measures and economic reforms introduced by Pyotr Stolypin after his appointment as Interior Minister (April 1906) and Prime Minister (July 1906).

But, from the point of view of understanding the shape of Jewish politics in Palestine, it is the intellectual and political development of the Jews in the Russian Empire, not their opponents, that counts. Here there are two figures that seem to me to be of particular interest—Ber Borochov and Vladimir Jabotinsky. Borochov was the theorist of the Jewish Social Democratic and Labour Party—Poale Zion (ESDRP—PZ). Frankel (p.330) says of him:

"He himself died in Kiev in December 1917, following a short illness, at the age of thirty six. But his followers and comrades from the Poale Zion party became dominant figures in the *Yishuv*, rising with successor organisations, Ahdut Ha—Avoda and Mapai. Yitshak Ben Zvi, the second President of the State of Israel, and Zalman Rubashev (Shazar), the third President, had been among Borochov's closest personal associates in the Russian party in its year of formation, 1906. Three Prime Ministers of Israel (David Ben Gurion, Moshe Sharett and Golda Meir) were also veteran party members although not personally identified with Borochov. His works have been republished in numerous editions in many languages... Streets and city quarters have been called after him in Israel."

If Borochov was the founder of the Labour Zionism that dominated Israel in the early years of its formation, Jabotinsky was the founder of the 'Revisionist' Zionist tradition to which the opponents of Labour Zionism, Menachem Begin, Yitshak Shamir and Benjamin Netanyahu claimed to belong. Both men have an interest that is independent of their political influence—Borochov as a Marxist philosopher belonging to the camp of Lenin's main Bolshevik rival, Alexander Bogdanov, and Jabotinsky as a playwright, poet and novelist, author of the extraordinary novel *The Five*—an account of the differing fates of five children in a Jewish family in Odessa about the time of the 1905 revolution. They deserve an article to themselves.

4 Hans Rogger: 'Was There a Russian Fascism? The Union of Russian People', *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Dec., 1964), p.398.



HISTORY :

Trinity College, Dublin—

"Although of late—writes Mr. John Wardell—and after frequent remonstrances, the authorities have instituted certain minor reforms, yet I feel bound to state that the position of history as a subject of study in this University is most unsatisfactory . . . It is significant of the general attitude of Trinity College towards historical studies that the very word "History" is omitted from the circular containing proposals for the establishment upon a proper basis of certain chairs in the University. .

"With the exception of the Blake Scholarship, a private foundation, no attempt has ever been made to afford the very slightest encouragement to the study of this subject (Irish History)... I may be mistaken, but I believe I was the first to deliver a lecture on Irish History in Trinity College." (*Trinity College: Its Income and its Value to the Nation* by Most Rev. Dr. Cohalan, Assistant Bishop of Cork. Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd. 1911.)

John Wardell: A graduate of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) history honours programme, a young man from County Limerick, was appointed lecturer in History at his *alma mater* in 1902 and promoted to full Professor two years later. Until illness forced his resignation in 1911, Wardell attempted to modernise and expand the history programme—and pioneered the introduction of Irish content—at the college with the help of a handful of colleagues.

From a desire to avoid at all costs a knowledge of native history, the modern Trinity has set out to distort and confuse the teaching of history in conjunction with Oxford and Cambridge on the basis that the chief source of the War in the Six Counties was not the undemocratic mode by which Britain chose to govern it, but was a consequence of the way Irish history was taught in our schools and the popular narrative amongst our people.

IMMIGRATION

Central European leaders signed a joint declaration yesterday, saying immigration should not be the answer to the European Union's declining birth rate. (Irish Independent-24.9.2021)

The strong anti-immigrant stances taken by Governments such as Hungary's—while popular with many domestic voters—have contrasted sharply with policies in the rest of the bloc.

These central European countries have also objected to EU criticism of their policies on social issues such as gay rights.

"Increasing the number of European children is essential to preserving Europe's Christian culture and other religious traditions for future generations,"

said the statement, signed by the Prime Ministers of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia and the President of Serbia, which is not an EU member.

"Migration should not be seen as the main tool to tackle demographic challenges."

The European Union's birth rate has been decreasing since 2000, Eurostat figures show, with 1.53 live births per woman in 2019, well below the 2.1 mark considered sufficient to prevent a decline in population numbers. (Irish Independent, 24.9.2021)

USEFUL LIFE CULTURE—

"The ultimate assertion of the "useful life" culture.

"Anyone without it or beyond it will not longer be a drain on the rest. I have some sympathy with this but unfortunately we live in a world where the determining factor in what constitutes a "useful life" is skewed towards its use to the market and not any use to society that can't be measured in such terms.

"In this case the market, or at least

that part of it that makes its money from pensions etc, is set to find a "useful death" more profitable. The "useful death" will also help to re-cycle capital as inheritance will now occur at an earlier stage.

"Although this development could bring some advantages to the insurance and pension industry (in terms of earlier than expected cessation of payouts) it'll probably only be a very temporary advantage as life expectancy will probably bounce back quite quickly.

"Also, given that this fall in life expectancy has hit the Afro-American community hardest the "advantage" to the insurance and pension industry is likely to be less as this community is usually the one that is least served by private insurance and pensions as they can't afford it in the first place." (A Reader, 15.4.2021)

"The big print giveth and the small print taketh away."

Archbishop John Fulton Sheen (1895-1979)

THE WHOLE TRUTH

Roy Bradford was a Unionist politician and at one time a Minister in the North. Way, way back in the 1970s, he made a speech in Dublin. He made it in, of all places, the Knights of Columbanus headquarters in Ely Place.

It was supposed to be a private affair. But I knew a man who worked there so I managed to sneak in and sit at the back.

And I listened in amazement as Mr. Bradford told the audience of Southern Catholics that he thought a United Ireland was inevitable, he didn't think it would be entirely a bad thing. In fact, he thought Unionists might eventually embrace the idea. Lordy God, I thought, I have a scoop.

It was decided to run it past Conor O'Brien, the Editor, [*Evening Herald*] to see just how big we'd go on it. He called me into his office. 'We can't run the story,' he said. 'I had lunch with Roy Bradford today and I promised him we wouldn't report on his speech. I gave my word.' He said. 'That's the only reason he felt he could say what he said.'

I was crestfallen. I was also too young and naive to realise that, given its importance, I should have given the story to another newspaper or to RTE, even if it meant being disloyal to my employer. But I didn't. (*And Finally . . . A Journalist's Life in 250 stories*, Paddy Murray, The Liffey Press, 2021.)

More VOX on page 12